

THE DAY THE KING  
MET HIS MISTRESS

Two pages of exclusive  
Royal pictures

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STEFFATHERS ARE  
NOT BOGEYMEN

How to create an extended  
family - without tears

FEATURES, PAGE 19

OSCAR YEAR FOR  
THE BRITS?

No, say the stars. It's all  
a total waste of time

THE EYE, PAGE 7

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# THE INDEPENDENT

Friday 13 February 1998 45p No 3,533 \*

## Cancer risk for children who eat too much

By Jeremy Laurence  
Health Editor

FAT CHILDREN are more likely to develop cancer in adult life. The risk increases with every extra chocolate bar, or its calorie equivalent, eaten each day.

The finding, based on a unique study of the nation's health and diet which started in the Thirties, offers a possible explanation for the increase in cancer which now affects one in three of the population: that we are getting bigger. Cases of cancer have risen 30 per cent among women and 21 per cent among men between 1979 and 1991 and this is only partly explained by the ageing of the population.

Latest figures published yesterday show that cancer has overtaken heart disease to become Britain's biggest killer. Nearly 9,000 more people died from cancer than from heart disease in 1996, according to the Cancer Research Campaign.

Success in combating heart disease, deaths from which have fallen sharply, has highlighted slower progress in tackling cancer, chiefly because of the difficulty of persuading people not to smoke - especially the young and women.

In another development yesterday, lung-cancer sufferers seeking compensation from tobacco manufacturers scored a significant advance when the High Court lifted gagging orders on the plaintiffs and ruled that they would not be liable for huge legal costs if they lost.

Smoking is the chief cause of cancer and outweighs all other causes. But the study of children's diets, published in the *British Medical Journal*, shows that the quantity of calories eaten affects the risk of developing cancers other than those related to smoking.

Almost 4,000 children whose

diets were closely monitored in the late Thirties were followed up for 60 years. One in 20 had died of cancer and the risk was highest among those who ate most as children. For each extra megajoule - 239 calories - eaten daily, the risk rose 20 per cent for non-smoking-related cancers, allowing for other factors such as income and social class. A megajoule is about a tenth of the average adult daily diet, equivalent to a chocolate bar, a ham sandwich or a piece of cake.

The finding reinforces the message that overeating in childhood carries long-term risks. But researchers from the University of Bristol, who carried out the study, warned that it should not be taken to mean food was bad for health.

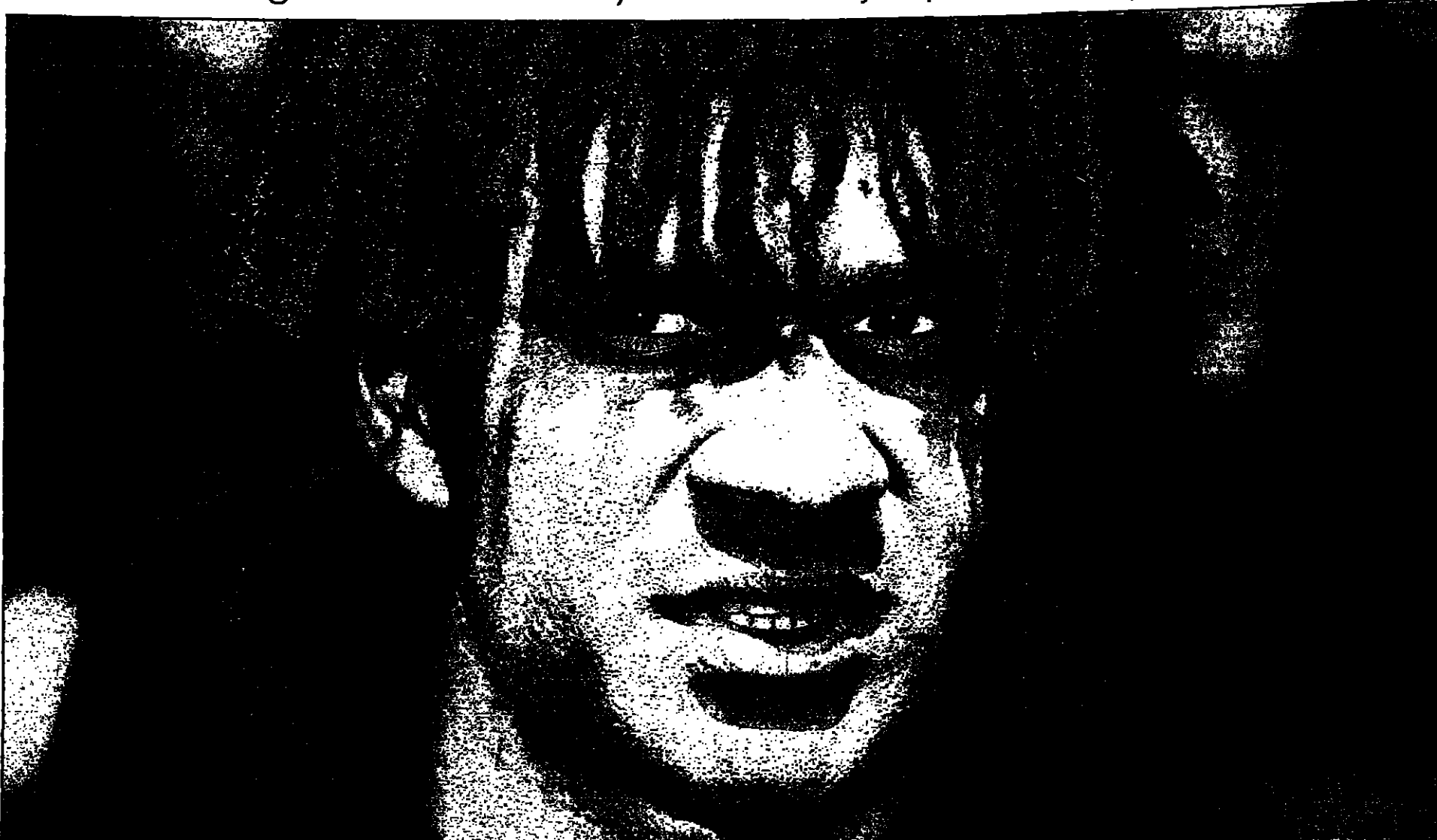
Stephen Frankel, professor of public health medicine, who led the research team, said: "At any age the individual risk of getting one of these non-smoking related cancers is small. This research shows there is a relation between energy intake and the risk of cancer and that is important in understanding the causes of cancer."

Tall people are already known to be at greater risk from cancer and average heights - and girths - have been increasing over the past 50 years with improving diet. Obesity has doubled since 1980. Research on animals has shown that restricting calorie intake slows the biological changes associated with cancer and ageing.

Cancer is triggered by a genetic mutation which causes the cells to multiply out of control and children who eat less may be at lower risk because they grow more slowly. Professor Frankel said: "If there is more of one of these unwelcome mutations occurring. The simple fact that the cells are growing more slowly reduces the chance of genetic changes."

But, he said: "Within each income band, the more you eat the greater the likelihood of cancer. That holds as long as you are eating enough. No one is recommending starvation."

Ruud awakening for Chelsea's sex symbol: did he jump or was he pushed?



Ruud Gullit: joined the London club in 1996 and is said to be 'astounded' by yesterday's decision to replace him

Photograph: Chris Grieve

## Vialli ousts Gullit in battle of Stamford Bridge

By Glenn Moore

THE MOST famous dreadlocks in England were yesterday given the chop and replaced by a shaven Italian pate after Chelsea Football Club claimed to have run out of patience with Ruud Gullit.

The glamorous Dutchman, who has restored Chelsea's reputation as football's most fashionable team, was relieved of his duties as player-manager after negotiations to extend his contract beyond this summer apparently foundered over pay and conditions.

Gullit, however, denied the club's version of events - which suggested he abruptly walked out

when told of the move - and claimed he not only found out about the decision from the media but had always intended to resign.

Gianluca Vialli, the Italian striker, has been appointed player-manager with immediate effect. Gullit, 35, will continue to be paid until July but will take no further part in the club's season which is reaching a crucial stage.

The decision stunned the football world. Gullit, who had never managed before, has been a great success at a club whose self-image has never been matched by its achievements. Last May, he steered Chelsea to victory in the FA Cup final, their first major honour since 1971, and at

present they are second in the Premiership, have reached the quarter-finals of European Cup-Winners' Cup, and play in the Coca-Cola Cup semi-finals on Wednesday.

Chelsea said the timing of the move was forced upon them by the need to avoid managerial uncertainty affecting next season's plans. The club said it had been negotiating for three months but Gullit's pay demands were way in excess of what it was prepared to pay. Gullit, who has called a press conference for this morning, said there had only been one, amicable, meeting and he was "astounded" by the decision.

The choice of successor will not have helped.

Though Gullit signed Vialli in July 1996, their relationship deteriorated with Vialli frequently omitted from the team. Yesterday Vialli said his first task was to improve morale and restore "honesty" in communications.

Gullit arrived in England in the summer of 1995, signed by Glenn Hoddle, then manager of Chelsea, now the England coach.

He was revered as one of the best players the game has ever seen and his arrival epitomised the English game's recovery from the dark days of hooliganism to its current fashionable status. He was appointed manager when Hoddle left to take over the England job. **Sport, page 30**

## Pinter and Hume lead assault on plans for war in the Gulf

By Colin Brown  
Political Correspondent

HAROLD PINTER last night delivered a stinging attack on Tony Blair and Bill Clinton over the threatened war against Saddam Hussein, claiming the US President had "killed thousands of children" by sanctions and accusing the Cabinet of being excited by the prospect of dropping "big bombs" on Iraq.

The playwright led mounting opposition to war in the Gulf at a meeting of dissident Labour MPs at Westminster, as Cardinal Basil Hume, the leader of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, released a letter to Mr Blair expressing "strong doubts" over whether military targets could be hit without causing "disproportionate harm".

Mr Pinter, a long-term critic of American aggression, told *The Independent* that the close Anglo-American relationship forged between Mr Blair and Mr Clinton was "shameful and pathetic". He said: "The USA is a monster. It's actually the USA that needs to be stopped."

"Everyone knows that war is appalling but what we lose sight of is that it's been abstracted now and sanitised to such a degree... I said in my speech that Mr Clinton has killed children and he hasn't even noticed it, because they are actually abstractions - they are children dying by his sanctions."

War had been "sanitised by political propaganda from government with a certain kind of complicity in the media. That was certainly the case in the Gulf war," Mr Pinter added: "I

am not a pacifist. I am rational." Addressing an anti-war meeting at Westminster, Mr Pinter said: "Despite continual references to the solidarity of 'the international community', the United States has in fact held international law in contempt for so long it has succeeded in rendering the concept meaningless."

"Madeleine Albright [the US Secretary of State] said the other day 'our patience is running out'. I remember a man who used to say very much the same thing in the 1930s. The USA is now a bovine monster out of control."

"That this government can so glibly ally itself to such a pointless, utterly irresponsible and profoundly dangerous enterprise is lamentable."

Iraq crisis, pages 12, 13

## Friday the 13th - but worse is to come

By William Hartston

TODAY is Friday the 13th. For the superstitious, that is bad news, but there is worse to come: for the 13th of March and the 13th of November will also fall on a Friday. Three Friday the 13ths in one year is the most that can occur. It last happened in 1987; it will not happen again until 2009.

In Christian tradition, the Friday the 13th superstition is usually linked to the number present at the Last Supper, and the day of the Crucifixion, yet triskaidekaphobia - fear of the number 13 - dates back to pre-Christian times. In fact the Christian association between Friday the 13th and bad luck dates back only to the middle ages when the number 13 was already long established as a bad

omen in other cultures. The origins of 13-fear dates back to the Babylonians.

According to the 1894 edition of *Brewer's Phrase and Fable*, "The Turks so disliked the number that the word is almost expunged from their vocabulary". The French, at the end of the 19th century, would jump from 12 to 14 in street numbers. Even today, as the new Citibank building goes up on Canary Wharf, the numbers painted on the outside of the concrete pillars that will form the lift shaft read 11 ... 12 ... 12+1 ... 14.

From a rational perspective, such superstition is nonsense - though it must have been irritating for any nationalist to note that in the first year of the National Lottery, the numbers least favoured by the draw were 13 and 39.

### Today's news

#### Boxing and PMT

BRITISH boxing officials believe that women are unfit to box because they suffer from pre-menstrual tension which makes them emotional, unstable and accident-prone, an industrial tribunal was told yesterday. **Page 4**

#### Smaller classes

MORE than 100,000 infants will be taught in smaller classes from September as the first step towards fulfilling the Government's pledge to cut class sizes. **Page 6**

#### Costly pleasures

THE brother of the Sultan of Brunei, the world's richest man, spent £21m on an exclusive home to keep his prostitutes out of the public eye, a court heard. **Page 3**

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# Our ceasefire stands, say IRA

By Kim Sengupta in Belfast and Colin Brown in London

Northern Ireland ministers were last night fighting to ease the crisis over the Ulster peace talks with a clear hint that the Loyalist Ulster Democratic Party could be allowed back into the negotiations at the end of this month.

The move was seen at Westminster as a signal that Sinn Féin could be suspended for a few weeks, if the IRA is held responsible for killing a loyalist, as a deliberately limited punishment that would not permanently destroy the talks. Sinn Féin warned yesterday that such a suspension could unleash IRA hard-liners.

Last night the IRA insisted that its seven-month-old ceasefire was still in place. The terror group spelled out its position in a brief statement sent to the Dublin newsroom of RTE, the Irish Republic's broadcasting network.

"Contrary to speculation surrounding recent killings in Belfast, the IRA cessation of military operations remains intact," it said. "We reiterate our preparedness to facilitate a climate which enhances the

search for a democratic settlement through real and inclusive negotiations."

The UDP was suspended from the peace talks after the loyalist UFF broke its ceasefire for retaliatory killings of Catholics after the murder by the loyalist leader Billy Wright in the Maze prison.

Paul Murphy, the Northern Ireland minister, last night told UDP leaders via a video conference link to Belfast that London and Dublin would begin to review the UDP's eligibility to participate "with a view to considering whether the necessary conditions had been met to enable the UDP's re-entry in the process". Sources in London said it would require the UDP to show by "words and deeds" that the loyalists had resumed the ceasefire, and it was being obeyed.

Speaking in Belfast, Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams said: "The question could be better put in terms of how influential we would be if we were dumped out of the process we have every right to be in. There are no grounds for expulsion, and the peace process cannot work without us." Mr Adams also claimed that the IRA

ceasefire was still intact, but he refused to be drawn on who could have been responsible for the murder of loyalist Bobby Dougan, a leading member of the Ulster Defence Association, and Brendan Campbell, a drugs dealer.

If it is proved that the IRA were involved in the murders then it would be in clear breach of the Mitchell principles on peace which forms the basis for the talks, and it is thought make Sinn Féin's continuing presence in them untenable.

Mr Adams accused Unionist leader David Trimble of leading a propaganda campaign to have his party thrown out of the talks. "It is dictated solely by politician expediency and their own tactical objective of preventing any meaningful change in the status quo here in Ireland."

RUC Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan has so far resisted loyalist pressure to state publicly whether he believes the IRA were behind the latest killings.

Mo Mowlam, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, will listen to his views before deciding on whether to expel Sinn Féin.



Bad omen: A new message on a sniper sign near the Republican Derrybeg housing estate

## Compliment returned for pigs that put town on the map

By Andrew Buncombe

London's East End has its Jack the Ripper trail, Canterbury has its pilgrims' pathway and in Liverpool fans can visit the haunts of the Beatles.

Now Malmesbury in Wilt-

shire has become a likely member of this select group with its "trotter trail".

Inspired by the publicity, nay hysteria, surrounding the escape, hunt, capture and eventual tabloid buy-up of two local pigs, tourist information officers

are preparing maps tracing the footsteps of the animals.

The two pigs, quickly nicknamed Butch and Sundance, grabbed attention last month when they escaped from an abattoir. Their escape across a swollen river and their return

to the wild for a week before being caught. Inspired yards of newspaper and some of the worst pig jokes imaginable.

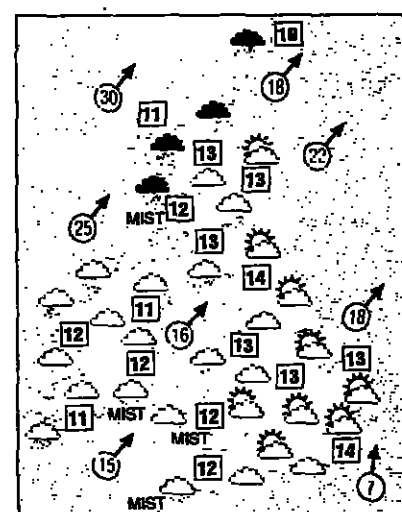
While nationally the excitement surrounding the pigs has died down, the Malmesbury Tourist Information Office is

still deluged by calls about them. Tourist manager Sandra Pell said the "trotter trail" maps will be ready in a few weeks. "The reaction has really been amazing. We are still getting calls from the public, and from the media

wanting to do more coverage."

Cuddly toy versions of the two pigs have been rushed out by toy company Gosh International. Meanwhile the real-life heroes are enjoying a life of peaceful luxury at a sanctuary in Chippenham.

## WEATHER



**Noon today**  
It will stay mild everywhere. Central, southern and eastern England will have some cloud but it will be dry with the sun breaking through at times.  
North-west England and Wales will also have a lot of cloud with some light drizzly rain, although eastern Wales should brighten up. Northern Ireland will be cloudy with rain at times, becoming sporadic and drizzly. The north and west of Scotland will be windy with occasional rain but the east will be drier and.

**Outlook for the next few days**  
It will stay very mild and the south and east will continue dry. Rain will push south from Scotland into northern England and Northern Ireland on Saturday but probably no further, although much of the country will be rather cloudy. The best chance of any sunshine will be in the east. On Sunday spells of sunshine are more likely, especially across southern and eastern England. There will be more rain in the north however, mostly over the west and north of Scotland.

### High tides

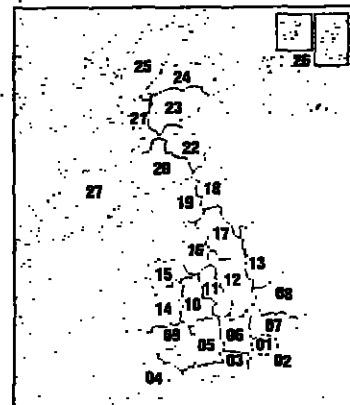
	AM	HT	PM	HT
London	03:00	7.1	15:21	7.2
Liverpool	00:14	9.2	12:29	9.3
Avonmouth	08:26	13.1	20:46	13.0
Hull (Albert Dock)	07:33	8.4	19:39	8.8
Greenock	01:54	3.2	13:42	3.5
Dun Laoghaire	00:25	3.9	12:43	4.2

### Lighting-up times

Belfast	17:27	07:48
Birmingham	17:16	07:26
Bristol	17:21	07:26
Glasgow	17:16	07:45
London	17:12	07:17
Manchester	17:15	07:30
Newcastle	17:08	07:32

### Sun & moon

Sun rises	07:19	Sun sets	17:12
Moon rises	19:34	Moon sets	05:06
Last quarter February 1998			



### INDEPENDENT Weatherline

For the latest forecasts dial 0891 5009 followed by the two digits for your area indicated by the above map.  
Source: The Met Office. Calls charged at 50p per min at all times (inc VAT).

### Out and about with AA Roadwatch

Call 0336 401777 for the latest local and regional traffic news. Source: The Automobile Association. Calls charged at 50p per min at all times (inc VAT).

### World weather

Algeria	11.55	Chicago	5.41	Lima	10.86	Paris	12.30
Alexandria	11.55	Christchurch	21.22	Lisbon	11.59	Puerto Stanley	10.40
Algiers	11.55	Colombo	14.57	Locarno	11.54	Prague	11.51
Amman	11.55	Copenhagen	14.57	Lyon	11.54	Rangoon	11.52
Ankara	11.55	Cairo	14.57	Luxembourg	11.46	Rhodes	11.52
Antananarivo	11.55	Cardiff	14.58	Madrid	11.49	Rio de Jan	11.52
Auckland	14.79	Cebu	14.58	Mannila	11.53	Rome	11.57
Baghdad	11.55	Darwin	10.36	Mexico	11.49	Santo Domingo	11.57
Bahia	11.55	Dhaka	11.56	Moscow	11.41	Santiago	12.84
Baku	11.55	Florence	9.46	Moscow	11.41	Santiago	12.84
Barbados	11.55	Frankfurt	10.50	Muscat	10.84	Seoul	10.30
Batavia	11.55	Geneva	10.48	Nairobi	12.29	Singapore	11.50
Bombay	11.55	Glasgow	11.55	Nassau	11.41	Stockholm	11.51
Buenos Aires	11.55	Hankow	11.55	Nice	11.41	Strasbourg	11.51
Burkina Faso	11.55	Hong Kong	11.55	Norfolk	11.41	Sydney	12.31
Burundi	11.55	Indianapolis	11.55	Norwich	11.41	Taipei	11.51
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# Scorn poured on claims of Diana death plot

By Ian Barrett

Mohamed al Fayed remained at odds with Princess Diana's representatives yesterday after claiming that the crash in which she and her son, Dodi, died was the result of a conspiracy. In an unprecedented statement, her office attacked speculation about the Princess's death and said it was upsetting her sons, princes William and Harry.

Crash investigators in Paris also refused to be drawn on Mr Fayed's claims, saying they would wait until the inquiry was over. "Mr Fayed has his own opinions but we are not prepared to comment on them. The investigation is already before a French

judge and only when he concludes his investigations will we have an opinion," said one of the investigating team.

The conspiracy theorists' view that the death of the Princess was no accident remained, at first, confined to sections of the Arab media with a vested interest in pointing the finger at Western security services. Most people accepted the official line that the fatal crash in Paris last August had been an accident.

Yet as the official French investigation into the circumstances of the tragedy drags slowly on behind closed doors, so the rumour mill has gathered pace.

Rumours insinuating that the deaths of Princess Diana, Dodi Fayed and their driver, Henri Paul, were the result of an elaborate plot, began almost immediately after the tragedy. But the conspiracy theory really took hold three weeks later as it emerged that a white car, believed to be a Fiat Uno, had been involved in the accident but had mysteriously disappeared. Furthermore, the existence of the white car had at first been denied by the French.

Then on 22 September, the American magazine *Time* published an article stating that a doctor claimed to have been informed by a colleague, who treated the princess at the crash scene, that she had told him she was "six weeks pregnant".

The story struck a chord with those who remembered that while holidaying in St

Tropez earlier in the summer, Diana, had said to journalists: "You will have a big surprise coming soon, the next thing I do." This followed photographs of her in a swimming costume displaying a slightly swollen stomach.

It was also recalled that Diana had reportedly told friends that she believed her days were numbered because the British establishment regarded her as a "loose cannon". She had apparently expressed the fear that one day she would fly off in a helicopter which would suddenly explode.

Commentators pointed out that Diana's anti-landmine campaign had been causing great annoyance to the US government and to the defence industry worldwide.

Her relationship with the Muslim son of Mr Fayed, someone who did perhaps more than any other individual to undermine the reputation of the former Conservative government, could be seen as the ultimate insult to some sections of the establishment.

In a new book, *Death of a Princess: An Investigation* by Thomas Sancton and Scott MacLeod, the authors speculate that Diana's alleged pregnancy was the most "explosive element" in the whole affair.

They write: "For the mother of the future King of England to bear the child of an Arab and a Muslim, a child who would be the half-sibling of the heir to the throne, would be embarrassing and prob-

lematic in the eyes of the Royal Family and the ruling Establishment. If a pregnancy were confirmed, the conspiracy theories would be uncontainable. There could theoretically be consequences for Britain's relations with the Arab world and resentment among the 1.5 million Muslim population in Britain." Extracts from the book have been published in a national newspaper, reactivating the rumour machine.

Then yesterday, Mr Fayed brought the speculation to new heights by claiming the couple were forced off the road to their deaths. "I believe 99.9 per cent it was no accident," he said. "I will not rest until I have established exactly what happened."

£400,000 for Diana's song, page 15

## The wedding of the future: old, new, borrowed – or just blue?



And the bride wore knickers: Preparations for the first fashion parade of the National Wedding Show which opened at Olympia, London, yesterday

Photograph: Rui Xavier

## Kate Adie hits out at management style of the BBC

By Rob Brown  
Media Editor

As she prepares to go to the Gulf, the BBC's chief news correspondent, Kate Adie, has launched a scathing attack on her bosses for being better versed in American-style management-speak than in the practicalities of broadcasting.

In an interview with the trade journal *Press Gazette* to mark 30 years in broadcasting, she said a "huge division" had developed between the people who run the corporation and those who make programmes.

"There is undoubtedly now a management [at the BBC] ... which actually wouldn't know how to broadcast if it was put up against a wall and you said you were going to shoot them," she said. "It's a fashion... At the moment we are into a rather Americanised management obsession. I read memos and I am rather ashamed by some of the management-speak that knocks around this building."

This is the second time in a week that BBC mandarins have been subjected to such criticism by a senior employee. The head of drama serials, Michael Wear-

ing, said he was quitting the corporation in disgust at both its commercialization and its "sub LA-style" approach to management.

But Ms Adie told *The Independent* yesterday that she did not intend to quit. "I'm perfectly happy. If I weren't I would be out of the place," she said in response to suggestions that she is increasingly frustrated by her less frequent screen appearances. She acknowledges that it is tougher to get on the *Six* or *Nine O'Clock News* with foreign stories because of the growing number of correspondents which the BBC employs to cover domestic events, but even global news service CNN could not lure her away with a much bigger salary.

"I don't personally find myself impeded in my work in any way," she said. "But I do observe what's going on in this organisation and I do worry about young people coming into it. I was brought into an organisation where public service was absolutely paramount. But this is a corporation where the business ethic is becoming increasingly important. In journalism you need people above you with the highest standards and principles."

## Brother of world's richest man 'couldn't stop spending'

By Kate Watson-Smyth

The brother of the world's richest man spent £21m on a home in Park Lane so that he could "keep his prostitutes away from the public eye", the High Court heard yesterday.

Prince Jefri of Brunei would also fly up to 50 prostitutes from all over the world to his palace in Brunei for his "nightly entertainment and sex parties".

"His main interests in life involve massive self-indulgence and spending unimaginable sums of money," Christopher Carr QC claimed.

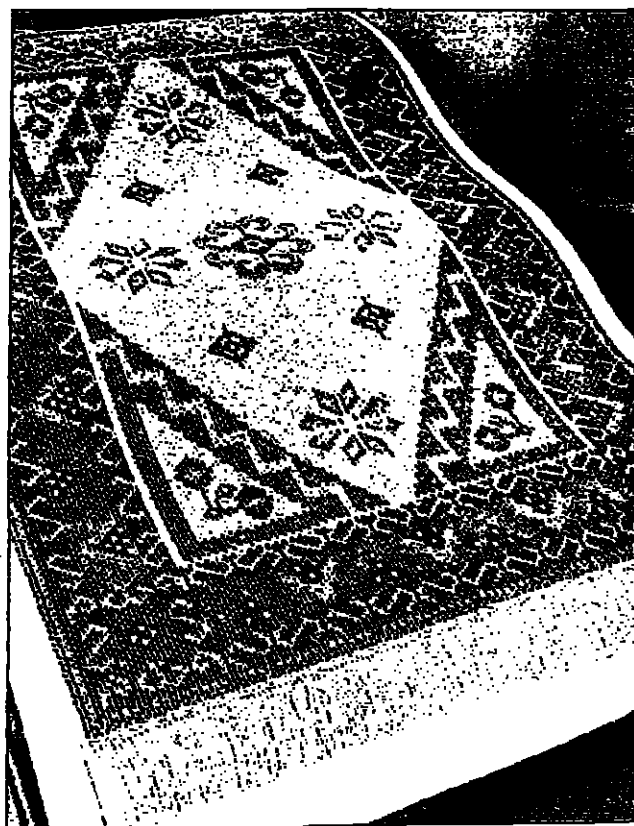
He said the Prince spent millions of pounds on expensive objects d'art including a \$7.8m rug woven from solid gold thread and encrusted with precious stones as well as a collection of erotic watches and pens and a £895,000 blackjack table made of jewels and semi-precious stones with a gold shoebox for the cards.

The Prince's extravagant lifestyle was outlined on the fourth day of a multi-million pound legal battle which could become one of the most expensive personal actions in British legal history.

Prince Jefri, 44, who has four wives and three children, is being sued for £80m by Bob and Rafi Manoukian, two of his closest friends and emissaries, who claim he failed to honour two business deals.

The Prince, who recently bought Asprey's, the Queen's jewellers, for £244m, is counter-sued for £100m claiming that Rafi Manoukian exploited a friendship and made unreasonable and concealed profits out of him.

However, Mr Carr, for the Manoukians, suggested that his counter-action was motivated by spite. "Prince Jefri is so affronted and offended at being sued by the Manoukians that he has instructed that their lives should be made a misery by suing them for everything that moves and engaging them in ex-



All that glitters is gold: the rug woven from solid gold thread and the blackjack table inset with jewels that the prince is said to have bought

Photograph: PA



implication is that Rafi Manoukian should not have been making a profit but the Prince gave little attention to Rafi's profit. Prince Jefri simply wanted what Prince Jefri wanted at a price he was willing to pay."

The court, packed with 10 barristers and up to 14 solicitors, heard that Prince Jefri bought the property at 45 Park Lane, the former Playboy Club, for £21m even though he had been told two months earlier that it was only worth £5m.

"A substantial proportion of his extensive palatial construction in Brunei was carried out for the purpose of providing his nightly entertainment. His sex parties attended by up to 50 prostitutes from various countries flown to Brunei, paid, housed, clothed and bejewelled at his expense."

The court was shown photographs of some of the items which Rafi Manoukian procured for the Prince.

"Rafi came to hear that Prince Jefri used to have gambling sessions at 45 Park Lane for some of his friends. It was in secret because it would be frowned upon in Islamic circles," he said.

Rafi Manoukian designed and commissioned the blackjack table and Prince Jefri was delighted and agreed to pay the price asked without negotiation.

"He now claims that he did not even know that this table had been delivered – it had never been taken out of its packing until recently. That is a lie. Its purpose is to protect Prince Jefri's appearance of religious devotion from any improper taint within a society of increasingly fundamentalist attitudes."

The Prince also paid around £5m for 10 watches which depict a mechanically copulating couple on the hour and £800,000 on a set of pens fashioned to resemble a naked couple.

The case continues.

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## The 12-ft poster that really is good enough to eat

**By Glenda Cooper**  
Consumer Affairs Correspondent

The poster looked good enough to eat – and it was when the world's first edible poster was unveiled in London yesterday.

The 12ft-long chocolate-covered bar from Cadbury's was almost 30 times its original size, weighed 100kg and required three men to carry it.

The gigantic bar was made from 40kg of chocolate and 22 gallons of milk – the equivalent of milking a cow for 10 days. It marked the relaunch of the Snack Wafer brand in the UK and a comeback of the 30-year-old advertising slogan "Bridge That Gap With Cadbury's Snack".

The poster site on Vauxhall Bridge was patrolled overnight by security guards. Tony Bilsborough, spokesman for Cadbury's, said: "Although the weather isn't hot enough to melt it, we're taking it down later. We don't want to tempt people into gorging on this massive spectacle."

The edible campaign was to be replaced by a 3D imitation later in the day. A further 650 poster sites across Britain are being erected today at a cost of £2m.



**Chocs away:** Melanie Sykes, of television's *Big Breakfast*, launching Cadbury's Snack Wafer with an edible poster in London yesterday

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  - Get a nice colour:
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  - Engine immobiliser
  - Twin speaker radio/ cassette (not tinny)
  - Silver inserts to bumpers & protective side mouldings
  - Tinted glass (ice cool)
  - Rear fog lamp :-
  - LATEST finance deals?! <sup>++</sup>
  - 3rd brake light
  - HIGH LEVEL
  - Headlamps must be HALOGEN
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# Women 'are unfit boxers due to PMT'

**BRITISH** boxing officials believe women are unfit to box because they suffer from premenstrual tension which makes them emotional, unstable and accident-prone, an industrial tribunal was told yesterday.

It heard that the British Board of Boxing Control refused to grant a top woman boxer a professional licence to compete in the United Kingdom after the board ruled women were "too fragile to box".

Jane Couch, 29, the world welterweight champion, who is forced to fight abroad, has accused the BBBC of sexual discrimination at a hearing in Croydon, south London.

Dinah Rose, representing Ms Couch - nicknamed the Fleetwood Assassin - said: "This is one of the crudest forms of gender stereotyping. It is an attempt to protect the last bastion of male-only sport against the participation of women."

Reading from a letter from the BBBC, Ms Rose said: "They state 'unfortunately many women suffer from PMT when they are more prone to accidents, they are more emotional and more labile [unstable], which makes them more prone to injury'."

The tribunal heard that the BBC board turned down Ms Couch's application on medical grounds in June 1997. It claimed women should not be allowed to box professionally because they bruise more easily, can suffer weight gain during periods and become unstable when experiencing PMT. The board ruled that although contraceptive and painkillers taken for period pains would not be allowed.

Further, it said it would be dangerous for women to box when pregnant and they can suffer from lumps on the breasts after being punched.

The board also complained that the rule banning boxers from wearing anything above waist height would have to be "drastically reconsidered". It rejected an application by Ms Couch, from Fleetwood, Lancashire, who is 5ft 7ins and weighs 10 stone, on medical grounds despite no medical ex-



### Jane Couch: Forced to fight outside of Britain

amination being carried out. At yesterday's hearing Leonard Read, the board's president and chairman, admitted that it had not medically examined Ms Couch. In December 1997, Ms Couch was offered £10,000 for a fight to be held at Wembley Arena. But Mr Read said that women boxing "only attracted alleged fans who want to see women fighting each other much as they did women mud wrestling". The hearing continues.

## 'Mardi Gra' bomb attack

A MOTORIST had a lucky escape yesterday after a bomb, believed to be the handiwork of the self-styled Mardi Gra extortionist, exploded in his car.

The man picked up a plastic bag, which is believed to have contained the explosive device, from a cash point machine near Sainsbury's in Forest Hill, south London and drove off with it. He suffered from shock after it went off, but police have been unable to confirm whether it was the latest attack by the Mardi Gra bomber because the device was thrown onto the road and has not been recovered by police.

Scotland Yard, however, believe it bears all the marks of the man who has targeted Barclays Bank and Sainsbury's with a series of homemade bombs that use shotgun cartridges — the latest attack coming just a week ago. Police are appealing for anyone who saw someone place a bag by the cashpoint.

— Jason Bennetto, *Crime Correspondent*

## Choking London

**EXHAUST** fumes from traffic in the capital are causing pollution levels to breach almost all the Government's targets, according to a study unveiled yesterday from the London Research Centre. Last year saw levels of nitrogen dioxide exceed National Air Quality Strategy Objectives at all London measuring sites except Greenwich and Sutton. Nearly half the pollutant is spewed from vehicles and experts say exposure increases the risk of bronchitis and pneumonia. Concentrations of particulates, tiny deadly particles of dust, topped safety levels throughout the city.

**Randeep Ramesh, Transport Correspondent**

## Beef case set to go ahead

**A-SCOTTISH** hotelier who served beef on the bone could be the first to be prosecuted under safety regulations. The Procurator Fiscal in Selkirk is to proceed with the test case against Jim Sutherland, of The Lodge, Carfraemill. The case is to be heard in March and carries a maximum fine of £5,000.

Mr Sutherland organised the "First Prohibition Dinner" in December; diners were to have paid £12 for slices of beef on the bone and trimmings. But the arrival of health inspectors forced a change of plan: it was decided to offer the meal free in a bid to sidestep any legal problems and Mr Sutherland, who is also a farmer, footed the £2,000 bill.

## Police move paedophile

**CONVICTED** paedophile Robert Oliver has been moved from the Sussex police station where he has been sheltering to more permanent secure accommodation elsewhere in the country. Oliver, 43, who was jailed for 15 years for the sexual assault and manslaughter of 14-year-old Jason Swift was released last September.

He then stayed in Swindon, Wiltshire, London, Dublin, Liverpool and Manchester before arriving in Brighton, where police warned he posed a "significant threat to the safety of young men and boys."

## Crash firm fined £9,000

A COACH company was fined £9,000 yesterday for having faulty brakes on a coach that crashed, killing nine American tourists and the British driver. The brakes and speed-limiters were defective, which led to the coach colliding with a van and then careering off the M2 in Kent in November 1993. Sittingbourne magistrates were told. Breclanton, formerly of Travellers Coach Company, was not represented in court, but had pleaded guilty at an earlier hearing to having a defective speed-limiter.



# The story tobacco firms don't want to hear



Violet Rumsey: 'I feel that my family and I have suffered enough' Photograph: Brian Harris

British smokers who have contracted lung cancer yesterday cleared another crucial legal hurdle in their battle to win compensation from cigarette manufacturers.

Lawyers representing the smokers were given reassurance in the High Court that if they lose their case they will not be liable for huge legal costs. The decision – the first major one before the courts on conditional fee agreements – endorsed the no-win, no-fee agreement.

Furthermore, the gagging order which prevented the plaintiffs from talking publicly about their cases was lifted, adding to what the solicitor Martyn Day, of Leigh, Day and Co, described as "a good day as far as justice for the ordinary British individual is concerned".

Smokers' claim for compensation set to go ahead as threat of huge legal costs is lifted. Clare Garner reports

Mr Day said the ruling had "cleared the clouds" which the defendants, Gallaher and Imperial Tobacco, had put over the case in terms of the plaintiffs having to pay the costs.

"As a result I'm pleased to say that the whole of the legal team is happy with the idea that we continue to act for this group of plaintiffs and pursue the case with full vigour to trial as soon as possible."

Gallaher and Imperial Tobacco had argued that because the solicitors – Leigh Day and Co and Irwin Mitchell – and the barristers are using a Conditional Fee Agreement, they are intimately involved and there-

fore liable for costs. But Lord Woolf, the Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Aldous and Lord Justice Chadwick said that although the lawyers were acting under a no-win, no-fee agreement, they did not need any special protection. They were not given a debarment order exempting them from future legal costs estimated at up to £9m.

John Pickering, one of the solicitors at Irwin Mitchell, welcomed the judges' confirmation that their team would be in exactly the same position as advisers on Legal Aid.

He said: "We have no greater or lesser risk as to legal costs. Hence the spectre of us

being pursued by the tobacco companies has been lifted from us."

Legal experts said yesterday that, had the lawyers lost outright on the liability issue, it would have almost certainly halted litigation against tobacco companies in the foreseeable future. It would also have had a damaging effect on the Government's plans to expand "no-win, no-fee" agreements.

At present, 43 smokers have issued writs, but more are expected to follow suit. The youngest plaintiff, a 49-year-old mother, died in December.

A spokesman for the anti-

smoking pressure group Ash called on other living victims of lung cancer from cigarette smoking who wish to join the action to contact Ash.

One of the plaintiffs, 76-year-old Ernest Jones, from Croydon, south London, was in the High Court for the ruling. He had started smoking when he was 13, in 1934; his father had told him that smoking would help him to grow. For 52 years he smoked between 20 and 40 a day.

He stopped six months before he was diagnosed with lung cancer in November 1986; doctors gave him just 12 months to live. He is now clear of cancer but has endured 35 operations, including having half a lung removed. "I'm trying to keep afloat – that's all I can say," he said.

## It's addictive you see. You can't give it up

Violet Rumsey's story is one that the tobacco manufacturers tried to keep under wraps, writes Clare Garner. But yesterday, following the lifting of the gagging order, she seized her first opportunity to describe the addiction which is killing her.

Nothing could make Mrs Rumsey give up smoking, not even having half a lung removed. When at the age of 55 she was diagnosed with lung cancer, she vowed she would

never smoke again. What she had not realised was that she was suffering from an addiction that even a close brush with death could not cure.

"I stopped in hospital – it would be difficult not to – but when you come out you just automatically go for one. I'm afraid," said Mrs Rumsey, a 68-year-old mother of two. "It's addictive, you see. You can't give up. It's terribly hard." She eventually kicked the 20 to 30-a-day habit two years ago, with the

help of her husband, Derek, 67, and nicotine patches.

The onset of lung cancer aged Mrs Rumsey overnight. Before the operation she was a spry 55-year-old looking after two teenage daughters and working part-time in the family factory. Afterwards, she had lost all her energy; she had aged "all at once".

Now, after 13 years of living under the shadow of lung cancer, suffering side-effects from radiotherapy and a further

three operations, Mrs Rumsey is seeking compensation from the tobacco industry. "I feel that my family and I have suffered enough," she said. "Seeing as they [the tobacco manufacturers] encouraged the smoking in the first place, knowing it was addictive, I feel that they owe it to me."

Mrs Rumsey had her first cigarette at 14 as a way of being "sociable". Her main aim in bringing her case to court is to make other people, particular-

ly youngsters, more aware of the consequences. "It may stop them doing it," she said hopefully.

Mr Rumsey had every sympathy with his wife's inability to give up smoking after the operation. "It's all very well to say someone should give up because they are ill, but they are in a state in which it is even more difficult to give up." He feels passionately that people should not be put in her position in the first place.

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# Infant classes to reduce in size

By Judith Judd  
Education Editor

MORE THAN 100,000 infants will be taught in smaller classes from September as the first step towards fulfilling the Government's pledge to cut class sizes.

David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, announced £22m for 65 local authorities. The money has been made available by the abolition of the assisted places scheme which subsidised places at independent schools.

Council leaders said that, while the first stage in reducing class sizes would be easy, the Government would later face big difficulties if popular or isolated schools had to turn away children.

The money will be used to fund extra teachers and classroom space to ensure that no five, six or seven-year-olds will be in classes of more than 30 by the year 2001.

A quarter of infants in classes over 30 will benefit from the first funding allocation, which will be ring-fenced so that it cannot be spent on other services.

The Prime Minister yesterday visited Rosetta primary school in Canning Town, east London, which will be able to employ another teacher and adapt its building to include another classroom to cut class numbers.

Authorities had to bid for the money which has been distributed to those which can show both that they need it and also that they have a workable plan to solve problems. That means that some councils where pupils are in large classes are not included. Senior government sources said that the first councils to receive money were seen as pathfinders and the Government expected to learn from their experience.

They include Bury which will employ 40 extra teachers to cut classes for 3000 pupils at a cost of £584,000, and Derbyshire which will take on another 104 teachers at a cost of £1.6m.

Mr Blunkett said: "Reducing class sizes is essential if all children are to have access to the teaching support they need in their crucial early years when

they master the basics of literacy and numeracy."

David Whitbread, head of education at the Local Government Association, said: "We believe it is possible to make substantial progress in reducing class sizes but a couple of years down the line the Government will be left with the difficult cases."

"There will be places where you need a new school and there is nowhere to build one. There will be classes of 31 where the alternative is to send the extra child to a school five miles down the road."

Both the authorities and the Campaign for State Education, a parents' pressure group, say that ministers should work towards a norm of 25, rather than 30 in a class to give schools enough elbow room.

The initiative may prove controversial with parents who want their children to attend popular schools. Legislation will restrict parents' right of appeal if it threatens to breach class size limits. Mr Blunkett said that authorities would bring forward proposals to resolve the problem.

## Teachers urged to use reason not threats for pupil control

It is time for teachers who say "Stop it" to stop it. And those who try to keep order with the command "Shut up" should shut up, writes Judith Judd.

Classroom language, it seems, is one of the keys to controlling bad behaviour. Teachers who used attention-drawing demands such as "Girls!", "Sandra!" or just "3C" should expect chaos to continue, according to a booklet issued today by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers which offers guidance on discipline.

A string of commands, threats and demands is much less likely to end disruption than a firm signal that behaviour is unwanted, with a reminder of known rules. So a teacher should say "Rulers aren't for fighting



Rapping out orders is out; reason and rules are in

with" or should warn of the consequences of bad behaviour - "Someone will get hurt if this equipment is lying there."

Chris Watkins, of London University's Institute of Education, warns teachers not to make

derogatory personal comments about their pupils. "Timothy, stop being childish and give Rosemary her ruler back," is counterproductive because it builds up resentments. Instead, the teacher might say: "Timothy you're quite able to get on with your work, so return Rosemary's ruler and let her do the same." He also says teachers should also control their desire to react angrily to aggression by counting to 10 before responding.

Peter Smith, the union's general secretary, said: "As the chief schools inspector, Chris Woodhead, said in his recent annual report, the vast majority of schools are orderly places. But this does not mean that teachers don't need help."

## Toads start early wooing - but it could be the death of them



You know what it is like. It feels like spring, the temperature is rising and you get that powerful urge for a jump. But if you're a toad, an early headwave can turn that desire for a hop into a death mission, writes Steve Boggan.

The unseasonably hot weather is causing just such problems at Madingley Hall in Cambridgeshire, where

temperatures averaging 10C higher than usual are driving thousands of toads to head early for their breeding ponds. Unfortunately, however, that involves crossing a busy road.

The mating season is always a problem at Madingley but this year it has come early. Volunteers report sightings of up to 600 toads a night

crossing the road on their way to ponds built at Madingley Hall by the landscape architect Capability Brown. Fortunately, a "toad patrol", established in 1988, has built tunnels under the road between the toads' feeding and mating areas and volunteers are scooping up any that choose to risk dodging cars.

The fine weather is not good news for everyone. The warm conditions have caused heavy rainfall in northern and western Scotland which is likely to continue for several days. Fort William reported 5in of rain in just 24 hours. Perhaps the toads would prefer it there.

Photograph: Roger Bamber

## Universities face sharp drop in mature students

By Judith Judd

University applications for mature students have fallen sharply but those for school-leavers are down only slightly, according to figures released today.

Students applying for this autumn will be the first to pay the £1,000-a-year tuition fee introduced by the Government.

The drop in figures for mature students comes at a time when ministers are trying to promote lifelong learning.

Overall, the drop in university applications by the 15 December closing date was 4.2 per

cent, less than the provisional figure of 6 per cent released originally by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service.

A rush of late applications postmarked just before the deadline has led to the revised figure.

However, there is a big difference in application trends between school-leavers, down 1.9 per cent, and mature students down 13.4 per cent for those aged between 21-24 and 18.3 per cent for those over 25.

Tony Higgins, UCAS's chief executive, said: "We rather sus-

pect that young people are not being put off so much as was thought by the prospect of fees.

"They clearly see 40 years of earning power ahead of them and every prospect with a degree of a good job. Potential mature students on the other hand may include people out of work whose employment prospects may not be so good even after qualification. Others are likely to have bigger financial commitments already."

Diana Warwick, chief executive of the university vice-chancellors' committee, said the decrease should be set

against the 26,000 extra students admitted above universities' planned targets last autumn.

The 15 December date is not a final closing date but universities do no guarantee to consider applications received after that date.

The biggest falls in applications are for medicine, social work and institutional management while there are increases for marketing, market research, computer science and design studies.

Applications for primary teacher-training have declined dramatically, down by 15.4 per

cent. First degree teacher training courses will not, unlike one-year postgraduate courses, be exempt from fees.

There is a 30.7 per cent drop in applications from the Republic of Ireland which abolished tuition fees last year.

A Department for Education spokeswoman said that it was likely that there were more applications to come from mature students who traditionally applied later than school-leavers. Would-be teachers, she suggested, might be deciding to switch from undergraduate to postgraduate courses.

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# Minister delays full switch to digital television

By Paul McCann  
Media Correspondent

THE GOVERNMENT has kicked in to touch the thorny issue of when to turn off the frequencies that currently beam television channels into people's homes. It is now expected to make existing television sets obsolete around 2013 rather than 2003 as had been forecast.

The analogue frequencies which now carry television broadcasts are to be replaced by digital signals. Later this year, the existing terrestrial channels and a new consortium of Granada and Carlton will begin broadcasting on the new digital frequencies. To encourage take-up of set-top boxes, and in future television sets,

which can receive digital signals, the Government plans to set a date for the cut off of analogue broadcasting.

The previous Government had pledged to look at cutting off analogue five years after digital transmissions begin. But yesterday, Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, said that five years was not a practical option.

Instead, the Government plans a public consultation period and to follow a National Economic Research Associates (Nera) recommendation to study take-up of digital television for two years before announcing a cut-off date.

"[Nera] believe the existing analogue frequencies can be closed down in 10-15 years time," said Mr Smith. "We are ruling out

## THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION

● New technology allows television channels to be broadcast in a digital form that will take up less "bandwidth" or space in the radio spectrum. This could allow 200 channels to be broadcast over existing frequencies.  
● To receive the digital signals, viewers will need a set-top decoder for their existing television. In a couple of years, televisions will be available with internal decoders.  
● As well as broadcasting existing channels digitally, broadcasters plan a range of new

channels, like the BBC's free 24-hour news channel. Other channels will be paid for by subscription, like those planned by British Digital Broadcasting.  
● To encourage take-up, broadcasters are likely to subsidise the cost of set-top boxes. The first boxes may cost less than £200.  
● After two years of digital broadcasts, the Government will set a date when it will stop broadcasts on existing frequencies. Forecasts predict that this will be around 2011-2013.

the five-year option, it is not a practical option. We are not announcing a cut-off date now because it is not sensible to do so before DTT [digital terrestrial television] has

even started or we have any idea what take-up is likely to be."

The Government wants to move to digital partly so it can sell off the analogue fre-

quencies currently used by television to mobile phone companies and other private operators.

The television industry wants an early cut-off date to encourage take-up of digital sets and services. Manufacturers could produce more digital televisions at a lower cost to the consumer, which in turn would encourage people to buy them faster.

Yet the Government wants to avoid the politically unpopular course of forcing people to change their sets or lose their favourite TV programmes. In all, the cost to consumers of buying digital sets could reach £1bn to £2bn according to the Nera report. "It is the consumer who is king and our policy must be developed with the consumer in mind," said Mr Smith. "No one

is going to be forced into paying for adapting to digital TV when they cannot afford to do so... we will not wish to switch off analogue until digital receivers are universally installed in households as analogue receivers are now."

The Government plans to look at how a subsidy using the money from selling analogue frequencies might be used to help the last remaining people convert to digital sets.

British Digital Broadcasting, the company which plans to sell subscription digital television, put a brave face on the Government's announcement: "Today's announcement sends a clear signal: the future of television is digital," said BDB chairman and chairman of Carlton television Michael Green.

## What next for Tina, the queen of New York?

By Paul McCann

Just as China-watchers study speeches in the *People's Daily* for clues about the Chinese ruling elite, so has the New York and London media scene pored over recent pronouncements from the world's most-gossiped-about editor.

Tina Brown, editor of the *New Yorker*, and with former *Sunday Times* editor Harry Evans part of media's most glamorous couple, has dropped her usual reticence to drop hints that she may, and may not, be on the move.

In January she gave a very valedictory interview to the *People's Daily*-equivalent of the New York ruling class - the advertising-free Public Broadcasting Service.

On her fifth anniversary at *New Yorker* she listed her achievements - in raising the magazine's circulation and updating its pool of writing talent - in a tone that stayed largely in the past tense. It offered little for the future but a sense of a job completed. "I think all we want to do now is just keep on with this quality and keep on raising the bar," she said.

Then this week's *New Yorker* finds her writing - something she does extremely rarely - like a besotted teenager about Tony Blair and Bill Clinton after attending their soirée at the White House last week. Mr Clinton she describes thus: "His height, his sleekness, his newly-

### TINA ON BILL

Tina Brown on Bill Clinton: "Absurdly debonair... His height, his sleekness, his newly-cropped, iron-filing hair, and the intensity of his blue eyes project a kind of avian inclusiveness."

### TINA ON TONY

"His slight figure and youthful purposefulness give him an air of a clever, unsullied young cousin of Clinton's, visiting from across the water."

### TINA ON CHERIE

Tina Brown on Cherie Blair: "The ardent look that Cherie Blair shoots him [Tony] still has the undergraduate complicity of 'Darling, we made it, didn't we?'"

cropped iron-filing hair, and the intensity of his blue eyes project a kind of avian inclusiveness that encircles every jaded celebrity he passes."

Tony Blair has an "elfin glow" and Cherie shoots him "The ardent look [that] still has the undergraduate complicity of 'Darling, we made it, didn't we?'"

Brown-watchers attribute



Love-in: Tina Brown and her husband Harold Evans with Tony and Cherie Blair

this increased profile to the decision of the *New Yorker*'s millionaire owner, Si Newhouse Jr. to bring the weekly, and its finances, under the direct control of his magazine company Condé Nast.

One scenario has Brown returning to Britain to edit the all-

ing Blairite *Observer* - which could explain the journalistic onanism about the Blairs in her *New Yorker* article. And she was recently seen with the *Observer*'s editor-in-chief Alan Rusbridger at the fashionable La Caprice restaurant in London. Previous rumours had her be-

coming British ambassador to Washington.

One close friend thinks the *Observer* option doubtful: "She is probably on at least \$1m a year at the *New Yorker*. Si Newhouse is believed to contribute to her and Harry's rather lovely Sutton Place apartment. I find

it hard to believe she would give that up for Farringdon Road [home of the *Observer*]."

And yet the rumours persist. "Some say rather wickedly that the stories originate from Tina herself, just to keep up the lustre," says the friend. "But I would never believe that."

## Priest found guilty of sex assault on girl aged 13

By Andrew Buncombe

A senior Roman Catholic priest was last night facing jail after being convicted of indecently assaulting a teenage girl after baptising her into his church.

Father John Lloyd, 57, a spokesman for the Archbishop of Cardiff, was convicted of assaulting the girl more than 20 years ago. The jury convicted him of one indecent offence after considering verdicts for nearly 10 hours. They had previously cleared him of four charges of rape and six of indecent assault. They were unable to reach a verdict on a further nine charges of indecent assault.

All the charges, which have shocked the south Wales community in which he worked for three decades, related to allegations dating back more than 20 years. One woman, whose allegation sparked police inquiries, said Lloyd had raped her in the confessional at her school 27 years ago when she was aged just nine.

Cardiff Crown Court was told that Lloyd assaulted a 13-year-old schoolgirl shortly after baptising her. He had driven the girl back to his house where he assaulted her before taking her back to her grandmother. The victim, now aged 37 and one of six adults who said they were assaulted as children, said yesterday: "I would like to say I am pleased at the verdict in relation to my traumatic experience."

Lloyd, a parish priest in

south Wales for 32 years and a former primary school governor looked pale and drawn as the guilty verdict was read out.

Judge Mr Justice Rougier remanded him in custody to await sentence next week but warned a jail term was "virtually inevitable" given his position. The maximum possible sentence is two years.

Lloyd had denied four charges of rape and 17 offences of indecent assault covering an 18-year period from 1970.

The Catholic church said Lloyd would not longer be allowed to practise as a priest.

The Archbishop of Cardiff, the Most Rev John Aloysius Ward, said in a statement: "I am deeply saddened and ashamed by the events which have culminated today in the conviction of Father John Lloyd. My sympathy and that of the priests and people of the archdiocese goes out to all those who have suffered through his actions and to their families."

Since the trial began, police have received nine further complaints of indecency against Lloyd. Senior investigating officers are believed to be looking into the claims and could question Lloyd further in prison.

Mgr Kieran Conry, director of the Catholic Media Office, said last night: "The conviction of Fr Lloyd shows once more the problem of child abuse is present across our society from the church to the family."

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# Family tax credit can go in mothers' purses

By Diane Coyle  
Economics Editor

The Government will launch a national advertising campaign to boost the take-up of its planned working families tax credit when it replaces family credit next year.

The new tax credit will also include a childcare credit on a much more generous scale than the childcare element of the current benefit for families on low earnings.

The move will coincide with the introduction of the national minimum wage and the reform of national insurance in a

package of measures, to be announced in next month's Budget, designed to make work pay for those on low earnings.

The package will be on the same scale as the Government's New Deal, for which it raised more than £5bn from the windfall tax on privatised utilities, although the Government also expects the measures to reduce the bill for income support.

Dawn Primarolo, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, made it clear yesterday that the Government had backed away from a radical early version of the new tax credit. This is believed to follow the advice of Martin

Taylor, head of the task force on tax and benefit reform, whose report will be published around the same time as the Budget.

Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer, said in the House of Commons yesterday: "We plan to build on our £4bn Welfare to Work programme by unveiling in the Budget the second phase of our plan to modernise the welfare state."

The initial proposals were widely criticised because they would have posed a threat to the independent taxation of husbands and wives, and could have taken money away from many low-paid women, putting

it in their husbands' pay packets instead.

Ms Primarolo said, in a speech to the Women's Budget Group: "There is no threat to independent taxation from the working families tax credit. Nor would there be a compulsory transfer of resources from women to men." Couples could elect who would receive the credit, she said.

The new working families tax credit is designed to make it plain that work pays. Unlike the existing credit it will not be a benefit payment. It will be administered by the Inland Revenue rather than the benefits agency.

However, Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer, has moved to meet objections from campaigners who argued that the tax credit could transfer money from women to men within households, to the detriment of the children. The man is the main earner in three-fifths of the couples who claim family credit, but it is paid almost entirely to women.

The Treasury has indicated that there will be an option for women to receive the new tax credit through their local post office, in which case it would be deducted from their husband's pay packet. In addition, al-

though couples would have to make a joint claim to the Inland Revenue, just as they jointly apply for family credit, there will be no question of abolishing independent taxation. Critics had feared that the need for an Inland Revenue assessment of the household's income would make joint taxation inevitable.

The new childcare credit will replace the "childcare disregard" in family credit. This taken up by only 31,000 women, fewer than 5 per cent of claimants of the benefit.

Chris Giles, an expert at the independent Institute for Fiscal Studies, said: "It looks

like the Government is re-badging family credit, and paying it through the pay packet. They have ended up with something reasonably sensible."

A Treasury spokeswoman said reports that the Government planned to pay for a big increase in child benefit by clawing some of it back in tax from high-earning women was "speculative".

Most campaigners see an increase in child benefit, paid to mothers, as the best way of improving the welfare of children. The catch is that child benefit is a universal, not means-tested, benefit.



## Modified foods face new curbs

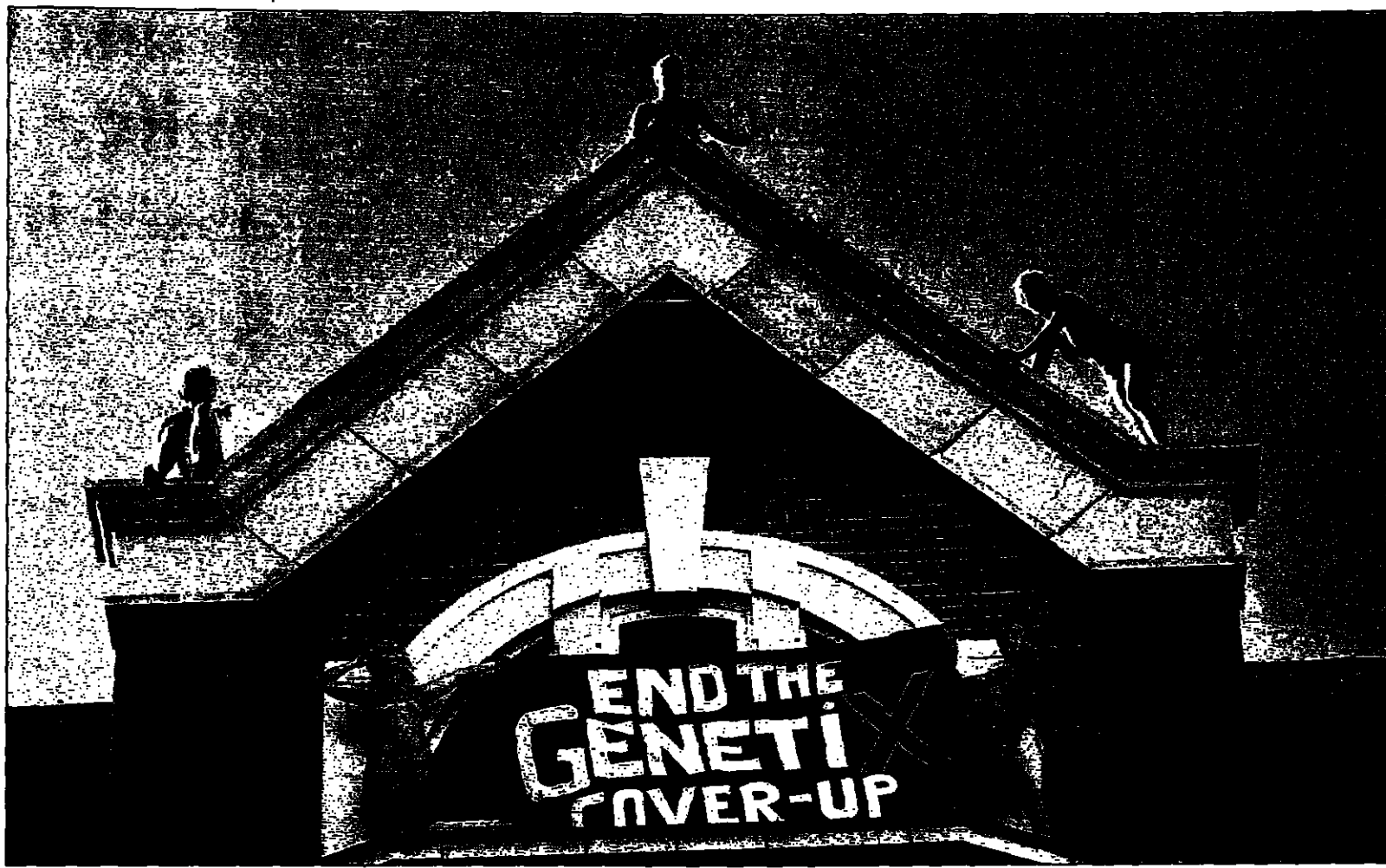
By Fran Abrams

The Government will use its presidency of the European Union to tighten procedures for approving genetically modified food, the environment minister, Michael Meacher, said.

In a Commons written answer he said he planned to press for ethical issues to be taken properly into account before modified foods such as soya and maize were approved for sale in Europe. "We have considerable concerns about the current procedures relating to the marketing and release of genetically modified organisms."

Although genetically modified soya products are on sale in Britain, a dispute is going on in Europe over approval of maize modified to resist weed killer and corn-borer pests.

The maize has been approved for sale in the EU despite opposition from the European Parliament, but Luxembourg and Austria decided to ban it. Mr Meacher said he expected the issue to be discussed at the European Environment Council in June. He wanted to see tighter controls written into the European Di-



Buffing up: Protesters on the roof of Bartle Bogle and Hegarty advertising agency protesting against its involvement with Monsanto

rective controlling marketing and release of the foods, which was being revised at the moment, he said. In a statement the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions said the process for approval should be made more transparent.

There were also suggestions there should be more analysis of the products' environmental effects, it said. Soya modified by the American firm Monsanto so that it can be sprayed with weed-killer is already approved and makes up about 15 per cent of

beans imported into Britain. They go into 60 per cent of processed foods. Now an argument is taking place over approval of maize produced by another company, Novartis. Environmentalists' main concern about the maize is that it

contains a "marker" gene used in lab tests which is resistant to antibiotics. Greenpeace says it could lead to resistance in farm animals and humans.

Dr Ian Taylor, scientific political adviser to Greenpeace, said the way European proce-

dures worked meant that applications to sell modified food could only be rejected if all the partners were against them. As one country would have had to propose the move, this was almost impossible.

What's in the food? Page 21

## Charities highlight loopholes in EU's 'ethical' arms code

By Fran Abrams  
Political Correspondent

A LEAKED copy of the European Union's new "ethical" arms-dealing code thrashed out between Britain and France reveals loopholes which will allow exports to repressive regimes to continue, a group of charities claimed last night.

They said the code, which is meant to parallel Robin Cook's ethical foreign policy, would not stop arms brokers in Europe from transferring weapons from one Third World country to another. The Foreign Office put up a robust defence of the draft code, saying that it regarded it as a major step forward.

A joint statement from Oxfam, Amnesty International, Saferworld and Basic, the British American Security Information Council, said the new guidelines were not tough enough to guard against human rights abuses.

Governments export to repressive regimes providing the equipment was for the protection of their security forces, there was no parliamentary scrutiny of the procedures and there was nothing to stop arm-

shipments from being diverted to war zones, the charities said. Although plans to secure an agreement during the British presidency of the EU were welcome, there were many shortcomings, they said. "The proposed code states that it is the duty of member states to promote transparency and mention is made of the need to harmonise export licensing procedures, but there are no measures included to ensure that these aims are realised. These

are serious omissions which threaten to undermine the efficacy of the code," they said.

A central part of the code demands that if one EU country hopes to win a contract that another has refused on ethical grounds, it must inform its partner of what it is doing. But because the code does not put a time-scale on the transfer of information a member state could unwittingly grant a licence which another had turned down, the group said.

The code says export licences should be refused if they might interfere with human rights and fundamental freedoms in the recipient country. EU countries should not allow exports which would prolong or aggravate existing armed conflicts, or which could be used other than for the legitimate defence and security needs of the recipient country. It begins, though, with a preliminary statement which says: "EU member states are committed to the maintenance of a strong defence industry which is a strategic part of their industrial base as well as their defence effort. They recognise that defence exports can contribute to international stability."

The agreement is significant because the EU has a 40 per cent share of the world's arms market. Britain has the world's second largest arms trade after the United States, and France has the next largest in Europe after Britain.

A Foreign Office spokesman said: "We think this is an important step in the right direction... We believe it is a very important step towards achieving our goal, which is a more responsible international arms trade."

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## Candid Short accuses colleague of lying



Clare Short: Golden elephants remark a 'dreadful mistake'

By Anthony Bevins  
Political Editor

THE SPECTRE of political vultures trying to pick out the eyes of Clare Short is presented by the outspoken Cabinet minister in a Valentine's Day documentary to be broadcast on BBC2 tomorrow night.

After a Cabinet exchange on the Orange Order marches in Northern Ireland last summer, an inaccurate leak appeared in a Sunday newspaper in October, in which she was reported to have told ministerial colleagues that the marches should be treated like those of "the Ku Klux Klan and Oswald Mosley's Blackshirts".

Tomorrow's fly-on-the-wall documentary captures Ms Short's incautious reaction, in which she accuses an unknown Cabinet minister of the leak. "It's just utterly malicious," she says. "It's someone from within the Cabinet because it's a lie about a discussion that did take place."

"It's very sad. It's extraordinary that people on your own side would do such things, but there you go. I have to be a little bit more careful."

In the programme, Ms Short explains the background to her controversial reference to "golden elephants" after the volcano eruption on the Caribbean island of Montserrat.

She says it was a "dreadful mistake"; she had meant to reflect the impossibility of

islanders' demands for aid as "pink elephants", but she had mistakenly used the adjective, "golden".

"It was dreadful," she says. "I feel very bruised and battered by it. I mean, part of it is my fault. It isn't all my fault, but I am very damaged by it, there's no question about that, and some people have tried to use it to damage me. And I am amazed how many vultures there are out there trying to pick my eyes out."

According to Peter Gill, the reporter, officials asked for her accusation against the unnamed Cabinet colleague to be cut, but it was Ms Short herself who asked - unsuccessfully - for another remark to be deleted.

The Secretary of State for International Development was talking about her main task, "that of reducing by one half the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015."

However, she then added: "Clearly, there can be no more noble task that the world could commit itself to as we approach the new millennium: much more impressive than comes at Greenwich, but I'd better not talk about that. Sorry, don't tell anyone I said that."

## AFGHANISTAN EARTHQUAKE APPEAL

Last week, the town of Rostaq was devastated by an earthquake. Within 48 hours of the alert reaching the outside world, Médecins Sans Frontières were in the area. A field hospital has been established and smaller clinics are being set up. Mobile teams have been organised to collect the wounded and hundreds of people have been treated for fractures, head wounds and trauma. It's not over though. Thousands of people from outlying areas are now converging on Rostaq seeking help and in the wake of the earthquake, the weather has turned savagely cold. Médecins Sans Frontières are doing all they can. With your help, we can do more.

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Facing up to the future: Lauren and Ashton Mills with their mother Tobi who is dying of cancer. Photograph: Oxford Mail

## Plight of children who may never find a family

By Kathy Marks

SCORES of children with hopeful, gap-toothed smiles gaze out from the pages of *Be My Parent*, a bi-monthly newspaper published by the British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering.

It is one of the main market places for advertising children for whom local authorities are seeking long-term carers. It is a highly competitive business: the supply of children far exceeds the pool of people prepared to provide them with a home and a family life.

The problem was highlighted this week when a newspaper in Oxford published a plea by 10-year-old twins whose mother is dying of cancer. "Kids and dog for hire," wrote Lauren and Ashton Mills. "Life-term contract. Sad girls need not apply."

The paths of their situation tugs at the heartstrings, but the twins are not typical of the children who are offered for adoption and fostering through advertisements in the local and national press, or in specialist publications.

They tend to be those who are most difficult to place: older children, children with disabilities or special needs, children who have suffered neglect or abuse. Nearly all are in local authority care.

The fact that young people have to be offered like wares underlines the national shortage of carers. The common misconception is that there are more adoptive parents looking for children than vice-versa, but that only applies to small babies. There are never enough people to take on the older or problematic cases.

Several factors are to blame. Although overall there are fewer children in care than 10 years ago, a far larger proportion are now placed with families, rather than in residential homes. Many more mothers work than in the past, so they are less inclined to take on fostering responsibilities. And children in care have had a bad press in recent years.

"We are talking of a potential crisis in terms of the availability of suitable foster homes," said Moira Gibb, chair of the children and families committee of the Association of Directors of Social Services.

All local authorities use some form of advertising, on local radio as well as in newspapers. Further along the process, once potential foster/adoptive parents have been vetted, they might be shown a video of a particular child to see if the initial "chemistry" clicks.

John Harrison, editor of *Be My Parent*, says that the most powerful selling-point in an advertisement is the photograph. "I suppose it's inevitable, but obviously there is the worry that people are too easily influenced by appearance."

Advertisements are candid, but cautiously worded, in order to protect confidentiality and to deter paedophiles. Adjectives such as "attractive" are never used; a background of sexual abuse is referred to as "a difficult early life".

Mr Harrison confesses to misgivings about the whole concept. "Putting children in a catalogue is a horrible business, and I wish it didn't have to happen. But if it finds them the right family, then the end justifies the means."

## Miners fund their Aberfan families own illness payout offered just £50

By Fran Abrams  
Political Correspondent

Miners who won up to £3.6bn in compensation for bronchitis and emphysema will fund a large chunk of their payout from their own pension funds, it emerged yesterday.

The Government will get a £1.15bn bonus over the next 10 years from surpluses amassed by the miners and British Coal staff pension schemes.

It was able to do this after taking over the schemes when the coal industry was privatised. Under arrangements made by the Conservatives, the Government will take 50 per cent of all future surpluses in return for guaranteeing pension payments.

Yesterday, Bledwyn Hancock, South Wales general secretary of the pit deputies' union Nacods, said the Government should hand back the money to miners and find the compensation from other sources. "It would be a despicable act if the miners have to pay for their own compensation," he said.

Between them, the Mine Workers' Pension Scheme and the British Coal Staff Superannuation Scheme have assets of more than £20bn. Last year, the mine workers' scheme declared a surplus of £1.5bn,

half of which was taken by the Government. Now the staff scheme is to declare a surplus of more than £750,000 which will also be split between pensioners and the Government.

Although the pensioners' payments are index-linked, Mr Hancock said the staff pensioners could have received a bonus of £10 per week each on top of that from their scheme's surplus. Instead, they received just £5.

Mr Hancock led the recent High Court battle for compensation for miners with chest diseases. Up to 100,000 former miners are likely to claim compensation after the judge found that the company, and the coal board before it, had been negligent in failing to take reasonable steps to minimise coal dust which triggered the diseases.

A spokesman for the Department of Trade and Industry said the Government had actually paid £2.5bn into the staff scheme over the past 40 years.

The Mine Workers' Pension Scheme had a guarantee from the Government, and "in return for that guarantee the Government shares with the beneficiaries any surpluses. If there is no surplus or if it is in deficit then the Government will have to fund that."

By Tony Heath

FAMILIES bereaved in the Aberfan disaster in which 116 children and 28 adults died were initially offered just £50 compensation each by the National Coal Board, it was disclosed yesterday on the eve of the unveiling at Merthyr Tydfil of archive material not seen for more than 30 years.

Eventually, the NCB paid out a total of £160,000 - £500 for each child, money for traumatised survivors and compensation for damage to property.

The disaster, on 21 October 1966, buried Pantglas school under an avalanche of colliery waste when a tip above the village collapsed.

Much of the new material now open to public scrutiny was discovered by Iain McLean, professor of politics at Nuffield College, Oxford. It was released under the 30-year rule at the Public Record Office, Kew.

His research assistant, Martin Johns, spent four months sorting through a mountain of documents discovered at Merthyr library.

The 73 files of evidence taken at the subsequent inquiry tell part of the story. Boxes of reports, council minutes and correspondence between the

NCB and Merthyr council concerning tip safety long pre-date the disaster. A yellowing cutting from the *Merthyr Express* of 10 September 1960 records residents' fears with the NCB responding that the tip posed no danger. Hundreds of letters from residents, some written in the 1950s, foresaw the disaster.

While rescuers were trying to extricate victims from the mass of slurry, Lord Robens, then NCB chairman, was at a party to mark his installation as Chancellor of Surrey University.

He went to South Wales the next day after commenting on the "ghoulish" media coverage. Professor McLean said yesterday: "The Coal Board spin-doctoring its way all along. It controlled the agenda from the day of the disaster."

"Despite the tribunal's strongly worded report, Lord Robens did not resign, nor was any blameworthy member of Coal Board staff dismissed or prosecuted."

Despite its charitable status, the disaster fund which raised £1.75m was forced to contribute £150,000 towards the removal of other tips looming over the village. Last year, the Secretary of State for Wales, Ron Davies, arranged for the money to be repaid.

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# Sensation as Royal Academy returns to profit

By Louise Jury

SUCCESSFUL exhibitions and strong financial management have transformed the financial fortunes of the debt-ridden Royal Academy in London, its management said yesterday.

An 11-per-cent increase in the number of visitors to more than 1 million helped turn in an operating surplus in 1997 for the first time in four years. And that was without the crowd-pulling *Sensation* exhibition which falls within the current financial year.

Ian Blatchford, the finance director, said it was on course to be out of the red by the end of 1999, a year earlier than projected in a business plan implemented when the Royal Academy hit financial disaster two years ago.

The Academy has gone for calculated programming to secure its future with a major Monet exhibition at the beginning of 1999. Its last show of Monet works, in 1990, proved the most popular in RA history with 658,000 visitors.

The financial turnaround comes two years after auditors discovered the 229-year-old institution had debts of more than £3m following inadequate financial controls and a

£400,000 fraud by the former bursar, Trevor Clark.

The annual report yesterday showed that last year the RA cut its accumulated deficit to £1.8m, returning an unexpected operating surplus of £175,000. This compared with an operating deficit of £1.4m in 1996.

Cost-cutting and new avenues for raising sponsorship contributed to the improvement. However, David Gordon, the former ITN chief executive brought in to resolve the crisis, warned that there was a limited amount of corporate sponsorship now available.

He backed *The Independent's* campaign for tax reform to encourage individual donations to the arts. "If the tax laws were simplified the whole process would be made much easier to use," he said.

Launching the annual report, Sir Philip Dowson, the RA's president, thanked the "herculean efforts" of staff for the turnaround and said: "The last year is really a very considerable achievement."

Three exhibitions - *Giacometti*, *Bruegel* and *Living Bridges*, which was sponsored by *The Independent* - attracted more than 100,000 visitors as well as receiving critical acclaim. The *Summer Exhibition*,

where works by amateurs vie for position and sales with those by academicians, attracted nearly 150,000 visitors after years of decline.

The friends of the RA scheme, which celebrates its 21st anniversary this year, now has more than 70,000 members and is the third largest in the world. The corporate membership scheme, which includes 129 companies, is the largest in the UK.

Sir Philip said plans for the future included a £100,000 feasibility study into taking over the vacated Museum of Mankind, which is owned by the Department of Culture, and turning it into an educational centre, including lecture room.

## A few of my favourite paintings, by Vincent van Gogh



Master class: A painting by Rousseau (left), and two by Ary Scheffer (centre and right) among a display of four works admired by Vincent van Gogh on display until 17 May at Hertford House, central London, to celebrate the artist's link with the Wallace Collection. Photograph: Andrew Burman

### DAILY POEM

#### On Monsieur's Departure

By Queen Elizabeth I

I grieve and dare not show my discontent,  
I love and yet am forced to seem to hate,  
I do, yet dare not say I ever meant,  
I seem stark mute but inwardly do prate.  
I am and not, I freeze and yet am burned,  
Since from myself another self I turned.

My care is like my shadow in the sun,  
Follows me flying, flies when I pursue it,  
Stands and lies by me, doth what I have done.  
His too familiar care doth make me rue it.  
No means I find to rid him from my breast,  
Till by the end of things it be suppress.

Some gentler passion slide into my mind,  
For I am soft and made of melting snow;  
Or be more cruel, love, and so be kind.  
Let me or float or sink, be high or low.  
Or let me live with some more sweet content,  
Or die and so forget what love ere meant.

The Daily Poems for this, pre-Valentine's Day week come from *The Book of Love*, an 800-page anthology edited by Diane Ackerman and Jeanne Mackin (W W Norton, £22.50). "Monsieur" was Elizabeth I's French suitor, the Duke of Alençon.

## £10 buys a chain cutter

He's chained up through his sensitive nose and made to walk on red hot plates, whilst the back of his legs are hit in time to music. Onlookers taunt him and force him to drink beer. Why? Because they're teaching him to 'dance' for tourists who pay to watch his agonising waltz.

The World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) rescues 'dancing bears' and takes them to sanctuaries where they can be free of pain and suffering. But we can't carry out our life-saving work without the support of people like you. Your gift of just £10, or whatever you can afford, will help cut the chains of innocent animals. So please send your donation today. He's counting on you.

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## Second British aircraft carrier to head for Gulf as 'Invincible' undergoes radar repair

By Ian Burrell

HIGHLY SENSITIVE radar equipment has broken down on board HMS *Invincible*, the aircraft carrier which forms the backbone of the British military force in the Gulf.

Members of the ship's company have called home to their families to report the concerns over the loss of a key part of the ship's defence system. Families were said

to be "worried" by the news. The Ministry of Defence said last night that the repair work on the radar was "going well" and that it was hoped that it would be back in operation later today. The ship is currently alongside in the harbour at Dubai while the repair work is being carried out.

An MoD spokeswoman said that the breakdown would not put the ship at risk of attack. "It's not going to hamper her war-

fighting capabilities," she said. She said that *Invincible*, which arrived in Dubai on Wednesday, was expected to return to sea later today. She said that the carrier had come into harbour to repair the radar, to carry out some routine maintenance and to give the ship's company some much-needed rest and recuperation. *Invincible* was sent to the Gulf on 17 January but has been at sea since before Christmas.

Although the British task group in the Gulf is tiny compared with the United States deployment, the Royal Navy is still anxious to impress. Yet, almost inevitably in a period of intense war training, there have been problems which have hampered preparations, particularly on *Invincible*.

At the end of last month, a Sea Harrier fighter aircraft was almost lost when a cockpit tore open at an altitude of more

than 40,000ft. The pilot, who was exposed to temperatures of -53C, managed to return the aircraft to the carrier for repairs after it fell 37,000ft in three seconds.

The *Invincible* has eight Sea Harriers and seven Royal Air Force Harriers aboard, as well as seven Sea King helicopters.

A second British carrier, HMS *Illustrious*, is expected to join or replace *Invincible*, and is currently undergoing

training in the Mediterranean. The other British ships already in the Gulf are the frigate HMS *Conventry*, the destroyer HMS *Nottingham*, and the supply ships RFA *Bayleaf* and *Fort Victoria*.

The remaining British personnel in the Gulf are in Kuwait, where eight Tornado GR1 aircraft are stationed, and Bahrain, with two VC-10 tankers and a company of Royal Engineers.



Lesson of war: Iraqi schoolchildren being taken to Saddam's Martyrs Monument in Baghdad yesterday, to mark the seventh anniversary of the deaths of 54 Iraqis killed when a US bomb hit the Al-Amireyeh shelter during the Gulf war

Photograph: Patrick Baz/AFP

## UN in last-ditch drive for peace

By Rupert Cornwell

The United Nations, and above all its Secretary General Kofi Annan, are now at the centre of efforts to secure a diplomatic solution to the Gulf crisis, and avert the US and British aerial onslaught on Iraq which could start in a matter of days.

Although a first round of talks with the five permanent members of the Security Council on Wednesday made little progress, Mr Annan plans to repeat the exercise today, and British officials professed themselves "not discouraged" with the outcome.

If the five can agree on a clear enough mandate, the Secretary General could yet travel to Baghdad - as the Iraqis themselves have long been urging. But Mr Annan says he will not go until a deal is at hand. The two sides had taken "a few

steps forward," but there was still a "long way to go".

Reaching agreement within the Security Council will be almost as tough as finding one with Baghdad.

While Britain and US are uncompromising that Saddam must fully comply with existing UN resolutions or face the prospect of military strikes, France and China are opposed to the use of force, while Russia's ferocious hostility visibly shocked William Cohen, the US Defense Secretary, when he visited Moscow yesterday.

Complicating matters is the possibility of a further UN resolution on Iraq. Britain maintains that existing UN resolutions authorise the use of force, but would none the less like to see another one now - as a "strong signal," a senior Foreign Office official put it, which would be a "final warning" to Saddam.

But its tabling is being held up by the differences on the Security Council, and any text that could be agreed might be so weak that it only advertises the disunity of the international community over an attack.

Failure to agree anything would simply underline those divisions even more sharply - which is why the US is profoundly suspicious of the whole enterprise.

In the meantime, despite offers of logistical assistance dribbling in from various European capitals, the EU's heart is plainly not in the enterprise.

In the Gulf, Foreign Office minister Derek Fatchett wound up a visit to Oman and the United Arab Emirates, claiming opinion in the Gulf was hardening against Saddam, but most

other Arab countries, as well as Iran, oppose the use of force.

British officials believe the next few days will show whether a deal is possible. "The door remains open," they say - by coincidence or otherwise, exactly the phrase employed by the Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammed Saeed al-Sahaf yesterday after a meeting with the Arab League in Cairo.

But the US military build-up continues relentlessly, with the announcement that a further 40 aircraft including F-117 Stealth fighters and B-52 heavy bombers will be going to the Gulf. Two Patriot anti-missile missile batteries - flawed stars of the 1991 war - have already been dispatched to the region.

Notwithstanding the unyielding tough talk by the US, a sense is growing that diplomacy may yet save off the worst. Taken at face value, a declared British readiness to look at "special arrangements" for the inspection of Saddam's presidential palaces does not amount to much.

Whatever these arrangements, they will have to include the right for repeat inspections, and contain no time limit on them. UNSCOM must also take part. And, Britain and the US insist, the Iraqi undertakings must be in writing.

But, some diplomats say, brinkmanship is starting to budge the fast-frozen diplomatic ice floes.

The UN is in the thick of things, and Baghdad's revised offer of a two month inspection period for eight "presidential palaces", though already rejected by Washington, London and Paris, may not be its last.

## Cabinet gives Blair backing for attack on Saddam

By Colin Brown  
Chief Political Correspondent

TONY BLAIR yesterday secured Cabinet backing for war in the Gulf after dismissing Saddam Hussein's offer of a compromise over United Nations inspections of presidential palaces as "completely hopeless".

A Cabinet source told *The Independent* that there was no dissent within the Cabinet, and there was a feeling that war was now inevitable. "No one spoke against it. Force is the only thing that may move Saddam."

Mr Blair's official spokesman said: "The Prime Minister set out that should it go to military action, it was important that every effort was made to ensure that civilian life was not harmed."

"He believed we have the technology and that any military action could be carried out in a way to avoid that and any environmental catastrophe."

But the Cabinet is braced to withstand public protests over the possible civilian casualties. "There may be so-called 'collateral' damage, which means civilians will get killed. Saddam is absolutely ruthless and he won't care if his own people are killed. He has killed his own people before," the Cabinet source said.

The Cabinet was given an outline briefing on the targets including the palaces and President Saddam's Republican Guard by the Secretary of State for Defence, George Robertson.

To prepare public opinion for the war, Downing Street emphasised that the palaces President Saddam refuses to open to proper scrutiny by UN arms inspection teams are not historic monuments, but military bases, including one as big as Paris.

Mr Blair told the Cabinet that President Saddam had offered to allow the UN teams into the palaces but only for one inspection. "That is absolutely hopeless," he said.

The Prime Minister made it clear that he would lead a concerted propaganda campaign to counter the anti-war protests with details of the Iraqi stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction. The spokesman said: "He said people have to realise these weapons aren't a theoretical, abstract threat. He was saying to ministers that when they are out and about talking to journalists and colleagues and making speeches and so on, that we have to be constantly explaining why this is so serious."

Mr Blair pointed out to the Cabinet that there had been occasions when inspection teams had only uncovered weapons on their fourth visit. Mr Robertson reinforced Mr Blair's message by briefing the Cabinet on United States aerial spy photographs showing that the Iraqis moved weapons material around the bases in convoys of lorries, when inspection teams arrived.

He drew the attention of the Cabinet to newspaper articles warning that the threat was not theoretical but real, and that Iraq had developed several germs and toxins for weapons, including anthrax, botulinum, and the nerve gas, Agent 15. He said everybody was working flat out to try to get a diplomatic solution and that remained the objective, but he said the Government had to get more facts on President Saddam's arsenals.

Reporting on the diplomatic efforts, in the absence of the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, who is in Panama, Mr Blair said that contrary to the impression given in the newspapers, there was greater support lining up for the strategy against Iraq than had been reported.

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# Bellicose Russians ambush US defence chief

By Phil Reeves in Moscow

ANY illusions the US Defense Secretary, William Cohen, may have entertained about leaving Moscow without a drubbing over the Iraq crisis evaporated under the heat of the television lights yesterday during an encounter with his Russian counterpart.

After waiting stealthily for a packed photo-opportunity, the Russian defence minister, Igor Sergeyev - ex-chief of the elite strategic missile forces - pounced on his American visitor with a warning that Washington's policy could badly damage US-Russian relations.

Mr Cohen, hot-foot from a six-nation Gulf tour which included pep talks to US troops on the USS *George Washington* aircraft-carrier, arrived here denying his mission was to win over the Russians - a sentiment about as plausible as a claim by Bill Clinton that he is uninterested in women. He also said he hoped the Iraq crisis would

stuff denied it). When it ended, he asked to respond. "President Clinton has exercised great caution in not making haste ... but rather proceeding cautiously and with great prudence," he said.

"You properly raised the question of what are the possible consequences of acting militarily. It is equally appropriate to ask the question 'what if we fail to act and allow Saddam to continue to flout the UN resolutions, to continue to play hide-and-seek with the inspectors?'"

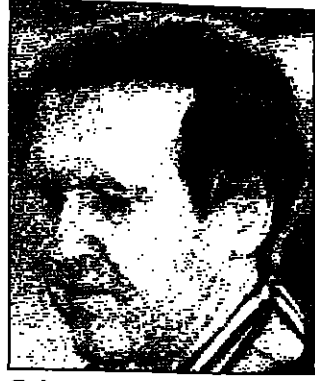
He also tried to lower the temperature, calling the US-Russian relationship one "of critical importance to our two countries" and describing Russia as "a great power". But the encounter only served to emphasise the gap that divides Washington and Moscow.

With US commanders in the Gulf saying their military machine will be ready to strike Iraq in a week, the crisis was inevitably going to overshadow Mr Cohen's trip. Sympathy for Baghdad has been running high for days in Russia, and is evident daily in the newspaper coverage.

Yesterday *Izvestia* said an attack on Iraq's chemical weapons could cause disaster, endangering millions in neighbouring countries. The crisis was propelled further into centre stage by a report in yesterday's *Washington Post* that UN inspectors in Iraq last autumn found documents from 1995 referring to a Russian deal to sell an animal feed fermentation tank to Baghdad which could be used for making biological weapons. Six weeks ago the UN demanded an explanation from Moscow, the paper said, but received no reply.

Moscow's Foreign Ministry dismissed the story as a "crude invention". It claimed Russia's contribution to Baghdad's weapons of mass destruction was "practically nil", adding that most components came from western Europe - notably the Germans, Austrians and Swiss. Mr Cohen declined to confirm or deny the *Washington Post* report, saying it was an issue for the UN to investigate.

Mr Cohen's visit did help clarify another issue, though. For several years Washington and Nato's spin-doctors have justified the alliance's eastwards expansion by arguing that it is not an issue that matters to Russians. True, most of the 147 million population have more immediate worries. But with the uncoiling mood of anti-Americanism within the Russian elite, unlocked by US policy in the Gulf, the West might now have to rethink that argument.



Cohen: Given a telling-off by Russian marshal

not dominate the agenda; they wanted to discuss nuclear safety and disarmament. But the Russian, his uniform gleaming with a marshal's decorations, was not in a peaceable mood.

Although his words were less emotive than the "conflagration" and "world war" predicted by his boss, Boris Yeltsin, they were a departure from the usual diplomatic niceties. Mr Cohen's aides listened in silence as the Russian lectured him about Moscow's "deep concern over the possible prospects for Russian-US relations in the military field, especially if military action occurs."

As the two sat across a table, the Russian continued: "Is America ready for all the possible consequences? Does the uncompromising and tough stand of the United States over Iraq help to strengthen stability and security in the world?"

Mr Cohen, a stiff, softly-spoken figure, seemed to be taken aback by this blunt - and obviously stage-managed - public dressing-down (although his



A Russian ultra-nationalist, with a portrait of President Saddam Hussein, picketing the US embassy in Moscow

Photograph: Reuters

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## Starr turns up heat on Clinton

By John Carlin in Washington

Kenneth Starr turned up the heat on President Bill Clinton yesterday, waging psychological war on his alleged paramour, Monica Lewinsky, and testing the limits of legal propriety by serving a subpoena on a Secret Service agent formerly on the White House staff.

Seeking to crack Ms Lewinsky's apparent resolve not to testify that the President urged her to lie under oath about an alleged affair, Mr Starr, the independent prosecutor investigating Mr Clinton, was trying to get at the former White House intern through her mother, Marcia Lewis, who appeared before the grand jury yesterday for the third successive day to answer questions about her daughter's relationship with the President.

After the first day's interrogation on Tuesday she was all smiles but when she emerged on Wednesday she looked flagrant. The pressure from Mr Starr's legal team had been so fierce she broke down in court and a nurse was called.

"This is a very emotionally draining and difficult time for my client," Mrs Lewis's lawyer said.

"No mother should be forced by federal prosecutors to testify against her child," Ms Lewinsky's lawyer, William Ginsburg, said Mr Starr and his staff were striving "to break my client down a piece at a time. I would describe it as abuse."

Ms Lewinsky and her mother, who shortened her name to Lewis apparently to boost an incipient book-writing career, shared an apartment at Washington's Watergate building. Prosecutors are working on the premise that Ms Lewis confided in her mother about the intimacies of her relationship with the President.

Ms Lewinsky was scheduled to appear before the grand jury yesterday but, her mother's grilling having continued longer than anticipated, she is expected to face her moment of truth next week. As may a former White House Secret Service agent subpoenaed yesterday to face questioning before the grand jury on whether he can

confirm previous reports that, contrary to the President's public denials, he and Ms Lewinsky spent time together alone in the Oval Office.

Mr Starr's decision to compel testimony from the agent caused a storm in Washington. Democratic congressmen loyal to the President voiced outrage at the depths to which they said Mr Starr had sunk, while the Treasury Department, which employs the Secret Service staff, was gearing up to fight the judicial order, arguing that the agent's participation in the legal fray would undermine trust between the President and his security detail.

Another former member of the Secret Service staff told the press on Tuesday he escorted Ms Lewinsky to a private meeting with the President in autumn 1995.

It was not clear yesterday whether he too had received a subpoena from Mr Starr.

Polls show the President's popularity remains high, while the media, widely perceived to be engaging in gutter journalism, has hit rock-bottom.



Indian women cheering as a helicopter carrying Sonia Gandhi hovered over the site of an election rally at Faridabad, in the western state of Haryana. Sonia Gandhi was campaigning for the Congress Party. Photograph: Surabh Dar/AP

## Sudan leader dies in crash

SUDAN'S First Vice-President, Lieutenant-General Al-Zubeir Mohammad Saleh, and at least two other officials were killed when their plane crashed in a river in fog in southern Sudan yesterday.

The official Sana agency said there were two survivors. A diplomat in the capital, Khartoum, said the plane apparently tried to land on a small runway in the town of Nasir, 700 km (435 miles) from the capital near the Sobat River and not far from the Ethiopian border.



Saleh: Killed as plane tried to land in heavy fog

## German Euro-sceptics put political differences aside to attack Emu

By Imre Karacs in Bonn

THE BATTLE against the euro intensified yesterday as two leading figures from opposite sides of the German political divide launched a frontal assault on monetary union.

Breaking ranks with his government colleagues, Kurt Biedenkopf, one of the most powerful regional grandees, urged an "orderly postponement" of Emu beyond the millennium. On the left, Henning Voscherau, a top financial expert of the Social Democrats,

shattered a taboo by calling for a referendum.

Both men have advertised their Euro-scepticism in the past, but neither has made the point so forcefully and at such an awkward moment as now. Coming in the wake of a court case against the euro and a manifesto signed by 155 economics professors opposing Emu, the latest interventions have reignited the faltering campaign to save the Deutschmark.

Mr Biedenkopf, the Prime Minister of Saxony and defeated rival of Chancellor Helmut

Kohl, suggested in a newspaper interview that the next phase of monetary union should be postponed to 2002. According to the current schedule, this - third - stage is to begin next January with the linking of national currencies, which are to be withdrawn from circulation three years later.

"There should be an orderly extension of the second stage," Mr Biedenkopf told the *Sächsische Zeitung*. He said he agreed with the authors of the manifesto, who had argued in an open letter earlier this week

that most European governments had failed to fulfil the economic criteria of monetary convergence.

Mr Voscherau, the former mayor of Hamburg, also claims to have been swayed by scholarly argument. While he describes himself as an advocate of deeper European integration, he disagrees with the way the project is being implemented, and bemoans the lack of discussion in Germany. "This sacredness, this lack of conflict, is like a cathedral built up over the euro that greatly prohibits public debate," he said. Both the Social Democrats and Mr Kohl's Christian Democrats have signed up for the euro, and are trying to prevent the issue clouding the election campaign later this year. Mr Voscherau did attempt to exploit German resentment over monetary union at his own regional elections last September. He was punished with the worst result for the Social Democrats in the city-state since the war, and was forced out of office.

"We should launch a movement towards democratic union with a timetable and an agenda in which countries who are prepared to join would have a common currency," he said yesterday. Appearing at the launch of a book penned by the four economics professors who are suing the German government, Mr Voscherau proposed a referendum coinciding with next September's parliamentary elections.

However, the government is unlikely to bow to his wishes, for the simple reason that the outcome of a plebiscite is pre-ordained.

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# Edward and Mrs Simpson make Fort



THE PRINCE OF WALES'S  
SOUVENIR: 1934-36



Photographs from the Fort Belvedere album, taken principally by the Prince of Wales and his future wife Wallis Simpson, show (anti-clockwise from right) Wallis Simpson preparing to go out for a walk, the Prince relaxing by the swimming pool, Mrs Simpson with her then husband Ernest Simpson, and Edward and Wallis with friends in the drawing-room

## The day Wallis and her husband met the prince and his mistress

IN HIS farewell broadcast to the nation, Edward VIII, King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British dominions and Emperor of India, made reference to the brother who would succeed him as his abdication took effect. He called him "the Duke of York". Even before he married a citizen of the United States, the divorcee Wallis Simpson, Edward had acquired a number of American habits.

The process began soon after the First World War, when Edward set out on a foreign tour at the behest of the Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, who perceived that "the appearance of the popular Prince of Wales in far corners of the Empire might do more than half a dozen solemn imperial conferences". After Canada he moved to New York, and a ticker-tape welcome. On his return to London he was full of the place and the song "A Pretty Girl is like a Melody", which he had heard at the Ziegfeld Follies, was

constantly on his lips. His endless whistling of this "damned tune" caused considerable irritation to his irascible father.

Fashionable in this, as in all things, the prince was one of the harbingers of the Americanisation of Europe. More significantly it was a sign that he was becoming his own man. It was not before long. He was 36 before he moved from St James's Palace and the immediate orbit of his censorious parents, who had recently instructed him to give up steeplechasing, as they considered it too dangerous a pastime for the heir to the throne. It was at this point that he moved to Fort Belvedere, an 18th-century house belonging to the Crown, near Sunningdale.

At the fort, as he always called it, he could live a life away from the disapproving eyes of the King and Queen. And how they would have disapproved had they known. For the fort became not just a refuge from the official world he increasingly disliked. It was also where he be-

gan to entertain a private circle of friends not drawn from court circles or the conventional aristocracy. They were an altogether more louche crowd of moneyed socialites, former army officers and toff politicians who shared his taste for the "high society" pastimes of the age.

The prince turned the fort's old-fashioned parterre into a poolside terrace for lunches adorned by young things with bobbed hair and dark glasses in pencil skirts. Having given up horse-jumping, away from parental scrutiny he took up the more perilous sport of flying. He frequently danced till dawn and had a taste for clubs; Sir Oswald Mosley, in his final interview before he died, told me of the enthusiasm with which the prince enticed him out to a seedy spot to see what Edward called a "damn fine nigger drummer".

These two aspects of his private life, the compulsive partying and the diligent gardener, spoke to contrasting parts of his personality. His upbringing had veered between the oppressive propriety of his parents and the surreal experience of a war in which he was never at the front

line but living constantly with its anarchic consequences. It had left him craving warmth, yet unsure of how to find it. His personality was emotional and yet seemingly incapable of deep reflection and was unreliable in his judgements. His gift for communicating easily with people of all backgrounds, honed by his work during the First World War, gave him an indefinable charisma and yet he could also be inconsiderate, selfish and even callous, as if he was rather spoilt by the universal adulation to which he was exposed.

For all the social whirl, he seemed, as his brothers married one by one, an increasingly solitary figure. "When will Edward marry?" his parents wondered to one another. But the prince's taste was not so much for marriage as for married women rather than marriage.

During the 1920s he had a succession of mistresses, from Mrs Freda Dudley Ward to Thelma Furness, a 25-year-old beauty known to him as "Toodles". Yet even in that there were proprieties. When he was a guest at weekend house parties with her he ensured there were others to chaperone them.

In 1931 Ernest Simpson, an American ship broker who had taken British citizenship, and his wife were invited, as last-minute guests, when someone else cried off, to such a party at Burrough Court, the Leicestershire country home of Lady Furness. In later years Ernest Simpson recalled: "We all got hastily to our feet, the ladies curtsying and the men giving a slight bow as Thelma introduced us in turn. I thought the Prince of Wales looked perfectly awful. I just couldn't take my eyes off his violent check tweed suit. He looked like that musical comedian, Max Miller - about the same height, too". The jaundice of hindsight was

clearly speaking there. "I glanced sideways at Wallis to see what she was making of it," he added. "Her curtsy was quite a professional effort, and in no time at all she was rattling away to the prince like she'd known him all her life."

The next time they met Edward had recently returned from a tour of depressed Yorkshire villages. The prince began to talk of what he had seen but the company was uncomfortable with the subject and the conversation swiftly returned to safe topics such as balls, hunting, and golf. Mrs Simpson alone turned to the prince and questioned him further. He spoke of his worries, of his limited constitutional powers, of his wish to achieve something with his life. In response, she asked him of his responsibilities and of how he filled his days. No woman had ever talked to him like that before, the prince later said. She was the first woman to show any real interest in his job. The day was cast.

### Tomorrow: The King's favourite

هكذا من الأصل



# Belvedere the home of the Fast Set



Fort Belvedere (above and top) became in the 1930s the place where Edward (right and below) could create a carefree private life away from official duty

## How the former king lost his beloved fort along with his crown

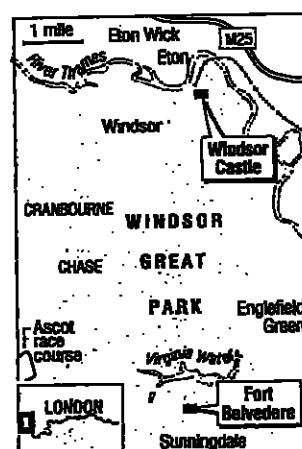
FORT BELVEDERE was built in the 1820s as a folly for royal tea parties: a battery of cannon was installed to be fired on royal birthdays by a resident bombardier. Diana Cooper wrote: "It was a child's idea of a fort. The sentries, one felt, must be of tin." The last "salute" was fired in 1907, and in 1910 the fort, on the south side of Windsor Great Park in Berkshire, near Ascot, became the "grace-and-favour residence" of a courtier. When it became vacant in 1929, the Prince of Wales asked to have it, and his father, King George V, granted it to him with the words: "What do you want that queer old place for? Those damn weekends I suppose!"

The Duke of Windsor wrote in his memoirs of the passion with which he rebuilt the fort and devoted himself to its hundred acres of garden. "I cleared away acres of dank laurel and replaced them with rare rhododendrons. I cut winding paths through fir and beech, revealing the true enchantment of the woodland setting ... I found a new contentment in working about the Fort with my own hands ... I pressed my weekend guests into arduous physical labour."

It was in these surroundings that he created a private life away from his official duties, and it was here that his friendship with Wallis Simpson (who visited for the first time with her husband in February 1932) developed.

When the Prince of Wales came to the throne in January 1936 as King Edward VIII, the fort assumed a special role as "the king's independent home" where he could escape from the tension and restrictions of court life. During the late autumn of that year, as the constitutional

Michael Bloch on the folly the Prince of Wales made the centre of high society in the Thirties



crisis arising out of his desire to marry Wallis developed, he withdrew to it in an atmosphere of virtual siege, and it was there that he signed the Instrument of Abdication on 10 December.

Before giving up the throne and leaving the country, however, Edward obtained an informal promise from his brother and successor, George VI, that he would be allowed to live at the fort when he returned to England. This promise was broken, as became clear during the Second World War when the Duke of Windsor learnt that, without his having been consulted, Fort Belvedere was to be made available for the evacuation of government offices.

He wrote bitterly to his London solicitor that this was "only another example of my brother's failure to keep his word to me of December 1936, when ... it was clearly understood verbally (unfortunately not in writing) that the Fort would be reserved for me until such time as it was mutually considered suitable that I should take up residence in England again ..."

After the war, the Windsors, who had decided to make their main home in France, asked on several occasions whether they might be allowed to live at the fort for a few weeks a year during the spring and autumn. As the duchess wrote to a friend in 1947: "We would not be there long enough to upset the powers that be ... It is a waste of time being homeless on the face of the earth and most disturbing ..."

However, these requests were always refused by the British royal establishment. In 1955, it was announced that the fort (which had been empty since 1936) would cease to be a grace-and-favour residence and would be let on a 99-year lease.

The first commercial tenant was the Duke of Windsor's nephew Gerald Lascelles. He refurbished it in a way that left few traces of its former occupancy. However, in 1977, Lascelles' successor as tenant, a son of the Emir of Dubai, sublet the fort to a television company for the making of the drama series *Edward & Mrs Simpson*, and thus it was briefly restored to expert hands to something of its former state. Fort Belvedere's present tenant is Gaïen Weston, the owner of Fortnum and Mason. Michael Bloch is the editor of *The Intimate Correspondence of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor* (1986)



Wallis Simpson, photographed by the Prince of Wales, with friends at Fort Belvedere: lunch on the terrace (above); at the swimming pool (left); and in a mystery quest on the lawn. Wallis was first invited to the fort with her husband in February 1932, and it was here that her affair with Edward developed





## Monica Edwards

Monica Newton, writer:  
born Belper, Derbyshire 8  
November 1912; married 1933  
Bill Edwards (died 1990); one  
son, one daughter; died 18  
January 1998.

Monica Edwards was a prolific and popular writer, fully deserving the choice of Children's Author of the Year made by Foyle's Children's Book Club in 1960 (along with Captain W.E. Johns of Biggles fame). Described by the magazine *Junior Bookshelf* as "wholesome books, full of practical activity and a sensible interest in outdoor life", her fiction was always more than a cut above the facile effusions of Enid Blyton. Characters were better developed, plots less unlikely, and the supporting cast of local people respected rather than patronised.

By the time she stopped writing for children, the massive convulsions in the 1960s about what was expected of modern children's books in terms both of their subject matter and their intended audience were beginning to make her work look old-fashioned. But in her day the well-crafted stories she wrote proved just the thing for those children who either shared the same type of middle-class background and assumptions, or else wished that they and their families did.

Born in Belper, Derbyshire, in 1912, the daughter of a vicar, her childhood was spent at Rye harbour in Sussex. On holiday from boarding school, Monica passed the time with local fishermen, once climbing down a drainpipe to join in some night sailing—a detail repeated in *The Summer of the Great Secret* (1948).



Edwards: well-crafted stories with a sense of place

When she married Bill Edwards in 1933, she found the perfect consort: someone who shared her love of the countryside and a strong sense of fun (the couple practised acrobatics for some time, selling postcards of their most spectacular balancing acts). A son and a daughter followed, and eventually a first book, *Wish for a Pony* (1947).

This was written for her daughter, who was transformed into one of the two heroines Tamzin and Rissa, the other based on her best friend. The huge success of this book later irritated its author, unwilling to have herself written off as just another hack producing pony stories. But it provided her with a set of characters situated in the Romney Marsh that was to last through another 14 titles, reaching out into other

topics such as smuggling, floods and storms at sea. The Romney Marsh was already celebrated among adults as a setting for Russell Thorndike's racy Dr Syn stories: Edwards made it doubly celebrated for younger readers.

In 1947 she bid at an auction for a derelict farm in Surrey. Very much to her surprise this was successful and she and her husband became first-time farmers, learning as they went. She was always very concerned with a sense of place (many of her adventures can be followed on an Ordnance Survey map), and Punchbowl Farm, Thursley, became the setting for a parallel series of 11 more adventures.

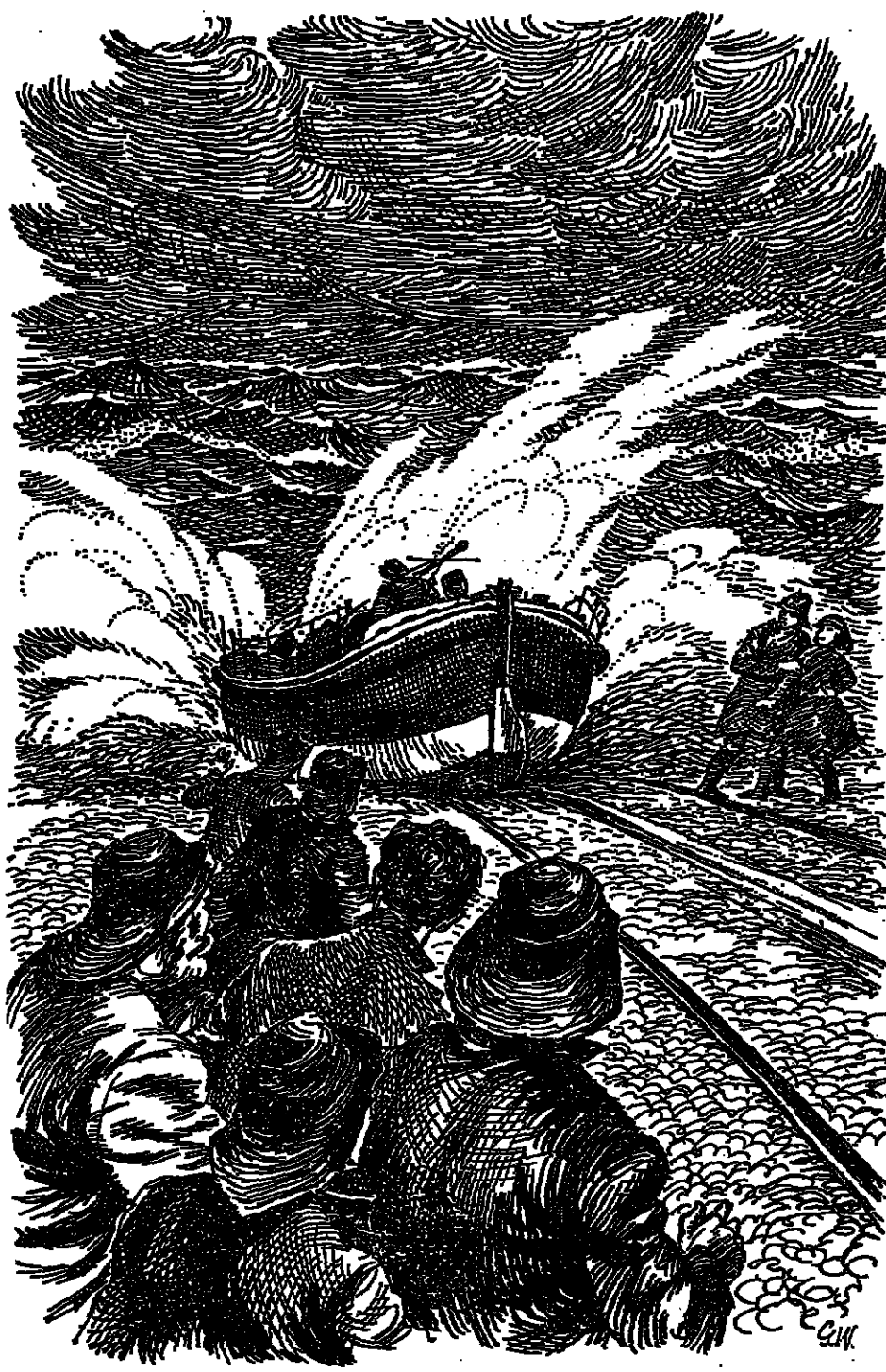
The child characters of the farm help out with daily chores such as rounding up the sheep, stumbling across occasional buried treasure or episodes of

time travel to live things up. Like Arthur Ransome, she primarily wrote about holidays: a time for gulping down breakfast, brushing moss and leaves off jodhpurs before going on to buckle the pony's throat lash, chatting to friends or planning picnics. Interjections rarely got fiercer than "Great Snakes!", and when the thoroughly competent young heroines were untypically at a loss they admitted to "not having the foggiest".

She was never a great writer but always a hard-working and honest one, much preferring gritty details of farming life to an unreal world of cops and robbers where child characters always know best. In her last children's book, *A Wind is Blowing* (1969), adolescence itself becomes the topic, with Tamzin realising that her feelings for Mervyn Fairbrass go beyond the chumminess experienced in earlier stories.

With the author's own family grown up, this was a natural time to stop writing about her fictional children, themselves now at the threshold of adulthood. Instead, she produced five more autobiographical books about Punchbowl Farm, describing animal life based on her own field notes and nocturnal photographs. She also wrote about her husband's serious tractor accident and the decision eventually to sell the farm. The couple stayed on in a small house built in the valley they both loved. Bill died in 1990, and with his wife's death the land is to be donated to the Woodland Trust—a characteristically generous gift from an author whose unaffected love of the countryside shone through everything she wrote.

—Nicholas Tucker



'The lifeboat rushed past them, down into the wild black sea': illustration by Geoffrey Whittam for Edwards's *Storm Ahead* (1953, Puffin Story Books 1957)

## Maurice Schumann

Maurice Schumann was a young second lieutenant, a former journalist, when General de Gaulle appointed him to be the regular Free French spokesman on the BBC, writes Leonard Miall (further to the obituary by Professor Maurice Larkin, 12 February). He had not had previous broadcasting experience and tended to speak in a high squeaky voice. Once when he telephoned my secretary replied, "Oui, Mademoiselle Schumann."

We were too cowardly to tell him his high voice sounded silly. Instead we said that we believed that his words would go better through the German jamming if he pitched them as low as possible. Schumann duly practised and soon became an excellent broadcaster.

In one of de Gaulle's first broadcasts he had appealed to French submarine captains to bring their ships to Britain to continue the struggle. In course of time they began to arrive. Maurice Schumann brought the first to Broadcasting House to speak to France. He was a huge man with a big black beard and a very deep voice. With horror we heard Schumann tell him to pitch his voice as low as possible in order to go through the jamming. We had to take him aside to assure him that his normal voice would be OK.

## Chris Philip

As the former owner of Lakeside, the property bought in 1983 by Chris Philip and Denis Guérout, I would like to correct the impression given by Michael Leapman [obituary of Chris Philip, 11 February], that the "previous owner was a daffodil collector who had dug up all his bulbs, leaving the garden a barren waste", writes Michael Jefferson-Brown.

I was at the time a commercial daffodil breeder and grew all my stock a mile or two away from the garden. Not a single bulb or plant was dug up out of the garden before or at the time of the sale. We were delighted to hand over the garden to Chris and Denis, who were both obviously going to enjoy and develop it.

To suggest that we left it "a barren waste" is the opposite of the truth; once or twice Denis and Chris contacted us after they moved into Lakeside to say they were contemplating certain plantings and works in the garden and hoped my wife and I would not mind—a human and pleasing touch from two people who from our first meeting became our very good friends.

—Steve Voce

## Attila Zoller



Attila Cornelius Zoller, guitarist, born Visegrad, Hungary 13 June 1927; married; died Townsend, Vermont 25 January 1998.

"I could only stay three weeks on my first visit to the United States in 1956," said the guitarist

Attila Zoller. "But it changed my views of jazz completely. I found out the point of the music on that trip when I heard Clifford Brown on trumpet."

Zoller was born in Hungary in 1927. "My father was a music teacher and he started me on violin when I was four," he later recalled. "When I was nine I started to like the trumpet better than the violin so I practised in secret on a borrowed horn. When he found out, my father didn't mind, and so I played trumpet for seven years in my high school's symphony orchestra."

At the end of the Second World War, the 17-year-old went to Budapest to find work as a musician. "It was hard to find work as a trumpeter, so I switched to guitar and taught myself the chords from piano music." In 1947, still unaware of

jazz, he joined one of the top commercial bands in the capital and it was then that he first heard Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie on the radio.

"Like most things, records were very hard to get in Hungary then. So, in 1948, just before they closed the border with Austria, I walked across the mountains with nothing but my guitar and some changes of underwear stuffed in the case."

In Vienna he met Vera Auer, who at that time played jazz on the accordion. "We formed a quartet together—and then we heard records of the George Shearing Quintet which included a vibraphone." It was impossible to buy such an instrument, so Zoller decided to manufacture one himself. "I moulded the keys myself in a foundry. The tuning was terri-

ble!" This feat of engineering was typical of Zoller's ingenuity; he later patented several musical devices in the United States.

Zoller and Auer worked together for five years, winning first prize at a jazz contest in Vienna in 1951. They played for US Army clubs in Turkey and then in 1954 Zoller went alone to Holland, and saw his first American jazz musicians—the Jazz at the Philharmonic unit and Lionel Hampton's band.

He settled in Frankfurt, where he met the pianist Jutta Hipp and the trombonist Albert Mangelsdorff. For two years he worked with Jutta Hipp and they joined the band of the tenor player Hans Koller. He met the American alto saxophonist Lee Konitz in 1955 when the two shared a concert bill in Cologne, and Konitz re-

mained a friend for many years.

When he returned to Hungary from a second trip to the US in October 1958, Zoller formed his most famous trio, which included the expatriate Americans Oscar Pettiford (on bass) and Kenny Clarke (on drums). However, Zoller and Pettiford were injured in a car crash; the group broke up and the guitarist went back to America, to stay, in March 1959.

On arrival, thanks to the pianist John Lewis and the guitarist Jim Hall, he was awarded a scholarship to the Lenox School of Jazz in Massachusetts. He joined Chico Hamilton's sextet, leaving when he got married, because he wanted to stay in New York rather than tour, and formed the International Jazz Quartet with the Belgian tenor player Bob-

by Jaspas; they returned to work in Germany and Belgium for a few months. In 1962, Zoller won an award for the soundtrack music of the German film *The Bread of Our Early Years*.

Jaspas became ill and Zoller returned to New York and joined a group led by the flautist Herbie Mann. "I was pretty much restricted to certain things" was his way of saying that Mann didn't let him play much jazz, but he stayed until 1965. He formed an alliance with the band's pianist, Don Friedman, and they worked as a duo both in the United States and on a trip to Germany between Mann's bookings. The European trips became annual and Zoller worked on European television and radio, on recordings and at concerts. He also played briefly for Red Nor-

vo in 1966 and for Benny Goodman in 1967. In 1968 he became co-leader of a trio, "Zo-Ko-Ma", made up of himself, Lee Konitz and Albert Mangelsdorff. They backed Astrud Gilberto when she toured Japan in 1970.

Settling in Vermont in 1972, Zoller started the Vermont Jazz Centre. He made some remarkable duet recordings in Frankfurt with the guitarist Jimmy Raney in 1979 and 1980. Despite ill-health, Zoller continued to play and record until last month.

He was particularly moved by a special celebration put together by 45 of his jazz peers at the American Guitar Museum in New Hyde Park, New York, to commemorate his long service to jazz. The fourteenth of April is now officially Attila Zoller Day in New Hyde Park. —Steve Voce

## Peter Longbottom

Peter Longbottom, cyclist:  
born Huddersfield 13 May  
1959; married Lyn Snowden;  
died York 10 February 1998.

Peter Longbottom was the heart and soul of his sport. A Commonwealth and Olympic racer whose life was cycling, he died on Tuesday at 38, riding his bike.

Longbottom, a valued and respected teammate to many, notably Chris Boardman, gave unstintingly throughout his ca-

reer which as an international lasted 17 years until the 1994 Commonwealth Games in British Columbia, where he won a silver medal in the 100km team time trial.

His first Commonwealth medal was a 1980 bronze in the same discipline riding with Boardman, whose career was to take him on to world and Olympic titles, and fame in the Tour de France.

Peter Longbottom was often the unsung worker behind the

triumph of others, and that was a role he happily accepted, internationally and at home. Yet ambition was never far away when he raced. If he could not win, then he made sure that it was one of his team.

He was a "must" selection for the international Milk Race for 10 years. Not as a sure-fire success, but as the tactical brain who could organise his men on the road, and lift them with a joke when the day went bad.

Only one thing matched his

appetite for the sport. "He was an astonishing eater, but built like a rake," said Jim Hendry, Britain's national team director in the late 1970s, and now chief executive of the British Cycling Federation.

"At one training camp everyone had had double portions. That was enough for them, but Peter finished off a lemon meringue pie intended for six. It all went to fuel his tremendous work-rate for his team."

"He was one of a few who

had a lot of success and still held down a full-time job. As a rider you could not buy his experience and knowledge. He was not just a road racer. He tried it all."

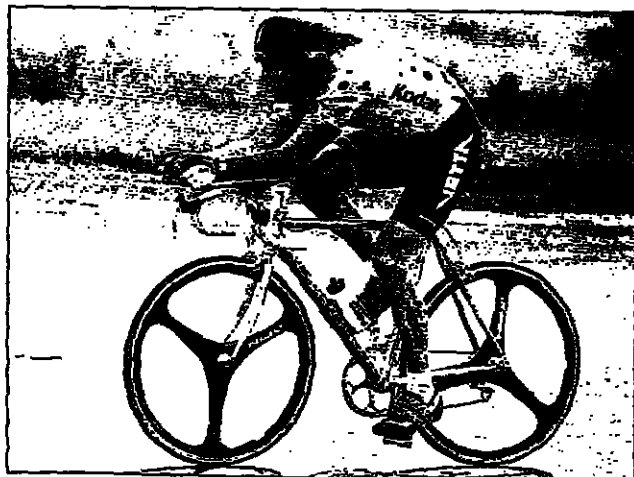
The man from Malton twice failed to make the final Olympic selection. When he was picked for the Barcelona Games at 33 he was one of the oldest cyclists to represent his country.

Longbottom retired from racing two years ago, ending a career that was as close to true amateur as anyone could find

in these cash-grabbing days. After several years as a surveyor with Ryedale District Council, he had become a director of a building company in York.

Even in repose he was restlessly inspiring others in their racing. "He did not walk away from the sport, but began working with younger riders," said Peter Woodworth, whose club, North Wirral Velo, recruited Longbottom. "That was really impressive," he said.

—Robin Nicholl



Longbottom in 1995

Photograph: Phil O'Connor

## BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

### BIRTHS

ROBERTS: On 28 December 1997, to Iestyn Roberts and Janet Bontrou, a son, Huw Emmanuël, a brother for Mair, Jesse and Owain.

THELLUSON: On 10 February, to Jenny (née Owens) and James, a daughter, Abigail.

### DEATHS

KLEINSCHMIDT: Mary (née Barker), formerly of Grahamsdown, died in Cape Town on 2 February. Much-loved mother of Anton, Gerda and Mark.

MEMORIAL SERVICES  
HARRIS: A Service of Thanksgiving for the life of David Harris, former chairman and chief executive of Neale UK Ltd, will be held at Crofton Parish Church on Thursday 12 March at 3pm.

MORGAN: A Memorial Service for Dafydd Gruffydd Morgan, Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge 1969-70, and University Lecturer in Agricultural Botany 1959-90, will be held in St John's College Chapel on Saturday 28 February 1998 at 12 noon.

Changing of the Guard  
The Household Cavalry Mounted Band

### Birthdays

Mr Michael Attenborough, Principal Associate Director, Royal Shakespeare Company, 48; Mr David Banks, Consultant Editor, *Sunday Mirror*, 50; Mr Liam Brady, football manager, 42; Professor Derek Burke, former Vice-Chancellor, University of East Anglia, 68; Dr John Clayton, former Apothecary to HM Household, Windsor, 77; Miss Margaret Collins, former Matron-in-Chief, GARNERS, 71; Mr Brian Doonan, actor, 49; Miss Eileen Farrell, soprano, 78; Professor Janet Finch, Vice-Chancellor, Keele University, 52; Baroness Flather, councillor and local government worker, 64; Mr Peter Gabriel, rock musician, 43; Mr Arpad Gancz, President of Hungary, 76; Mr John Healey MP, 38; Lord Lewis of Newham, Member of Parliament, 70; Mr John McAlonan MP, 50; Miss Kim Noak, actress, 65; Mr Leonard Pascoe, cricketer, 48; Lord Peyton of Yeovil, former government minister, 79; Lord Pym, former government minister, 76; Mr Oliver Reed, actor, 60; Miss Margaretta Scott, actress, 56; Mr George Segal, actor, 64; Dr Donald Sykes, former Principal, Mansfield College, Oxford, 68.

### Anniversaries

Births: Eleanor Farjeon, writer, 1881; Georges Simenon, novelist, 1901. Deaths: Dame Christabel

1958; Jean Renoir, film-maker, 1979. On this day: William and Mary ascended the throne, 1689; Alexander Solzhenitsyn was expelled from the Soviet Union, 1974. Today is the Feast Day of St Catherine of Ricci, St Ermenilda or Ermenegild, St Leinus or Lesin, St Martinian the Hermit, St Medomoc, St Polycarpus of Melitene and St Stephen of Rieli.

### Luncheons

The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh held a lunch party yesterday at Buckingham Palace. The guests were: Professor Ernest Rens (Equal Opportunities Commissioner for Wales); Miss Emma Thompson (actress); Lord Bingham of Cornhill (Lord Chief Justice of England); Sir Neil Cossons (Director, Science Museum); Air Chief Marshal Sir David Cossons (Air Member for Personnel and Air Officer Commanding in Chief); The Right Rev Richard Lewis (Bishop of Dover); Sir Charles Moore (Editor, *Daily Telegraph*); Sir David Williams (Chief Fire Officer, South Wales Fire Service).

### Synagogue services

Details of synagogue services to be held tomorrow may be obtained by telephoning the following. Sabbath begins in London at 4.57pm.

United Synagogue: 081-343 8999. Federation of Synagogues: 021-202 2245. Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues: 017-530 1643. Reform Synagogue of Great Britain: 081-349 4731. Spanish and Portuguese Jews Congregation: 017-289 2573. New London Synagogue (Masorti): 017-289 2573.

## LAW REPORT: 13 FEBRUARY 1998

### Lack of diligence by solicitors is unacceptable

Solicitors must understand that inordinate delay and a lack of diligence in the conduct of actions was totally unacceptable, and that orders of the court must be obeyed.

*Lowmes v Babcock Power Ltd: Court of Appeal (Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls and Lord Justice Potter) 11 February 1998*

The Court of Appeal dismissed the appeal of the plaintiff, Robert Lowmes, against the refusal of a 14-day extension of time in which to serve a schedule of damages in his action claiming damages for personal injury against his employers.

The plaintiff's claim arose out of an accident at work which had left him a paraplegic. His trade union had instructed

a firm of solicitors, who were extremely experienced in the field, to act for him. The writ was issued in 1990. In December 1993 a different partner in the firm took over the conduct of the case. In August 1996, after a complete failure on the part of the plaintiff's solicitors to serve a schedule of damages on the defendants' solicitors, they applied for the claim to be dismissed for want of prosecution.

An "unless" order was made by consent, giving the plaintiff's solicitor 28 days to lodge and serve a schedule of damages, in default of which the action would be dismissed with costs. The schedule was not prepared in time, and the plaintiff's solicitor applied for a 14-day extension of time in which to lodge it. The appli-

cation was refused by the district judge, and an appeal to the High Court judge was dismissed. The plaintiff appealed. *Bene Hyman QC (Thompson's, Sheffield) for the plaintiff; Anthony Goodall QC (Whitfield Hallam Goodall, Dewsbury) for the defendants.*

Lord Woolf MR said that the case had been properly conducted until the new partner had taken over in December 1993. After that there had been wholly unjustified and inexcusable delay.

If an "unless" order were not treated as a last opportunity to put a party's house in order, the court had no way of ensuring that its orders would be obeyed, and delays such as those in the present case would continue to occur. To allow the

appeal would mean that parties could ignore orders with impunity.

Although the consequences of dismissing the appeal would be serious for the plaintiff, he would still get his proper compensation. In practice, the damages would be met by the plaintiff's solicitors' insurers rather than by the defendants' insurers.

It was the duty of the solicitors, as officers of the court, to do all in their power to see that the plaintiff personally suffered no more than was necessary as a result of their default. In such a situation the minimum that they should do was to ensure that the plaintiff received independent advice at the earliest opportunity. In the present case independent

leading counsel had been instructed to advise the plaintiff, but it would have been preferable for him to have been instructed by independent solicitors.

Delays in cases such as the present had an effect not only on the plaintiff, but also on the costs incurred by both sides, and, where insurers were involved, the cost of premiums. The administration of justice was also affected, since the amount of court time taken up resulted in other cases being put back, and the reputation of civil justice was damaged. The message to the profession which should be heard and learnt was that the standard of diligence displayed in the instant case was totally unacceptable.

—Kate O'Hanlon, Barrister



# The new ties that bind

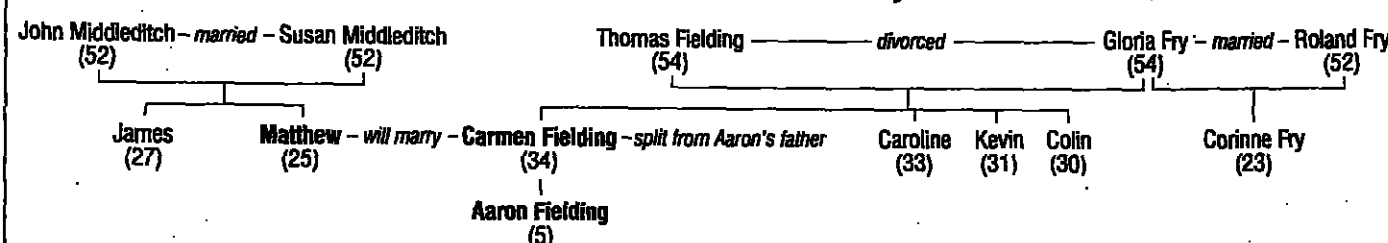
The age of separation and changing partnerships brings children into new families, often surprisingly successfully. By Jack O'Sullivan



MARRIAGE FOR  
THE MILLENNIUM



A modern extended family



The instant family: Carmen Fielding, right, front, is to wed Matthew Middleditch, centre, providing a new father for her son, Aaron, shown with him, and 'grandparents' John and Susan Middleditch. Carmen is with her mother, step-father and Aaron

UNTIL the past few months, five-year-old Aaron had no dad. He was also short of a set of grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins. And he knew it. "Right from a very early age he felt he was missing out on something," says his mother, Carmen Fielding, whose former partner abandoned her when she became pregnant. "At nursery and school he would see other children with both parents. He felt left out."

Not any more. Aaron may have lost out because his mother's relationship broke down, but he is also gaining from an equally modern phenomenon – the creation of extended families where there is no blood tie between immediate relatives.

Aaron suddenly finds himself with a father and many other close relations. The reason? His mother is getting married.

Carmen's marriage to Matthew Middleditch will not take place until the summer, but Aaron is not waiting for the formalities. "He already thinks of Matthew as his dad," says his mother. "He calls him dad. He is the only dad he has ever known. He misses him and gets very upset when he is away. When Matthew first went away, Aaron believed that he wasn't coming back. But he has grown to trust him. He boasts about his dad at school. Often when Matthew is here, he is the one who gets him from school, cooks his dinner, reads him a story and goes into school to help out in his class."

Matthew's life has also been transformed. "Initially, it was very strange, sud-

denly becoming a dad. But now it's lovely. I treat Aaron as my son. I see it as completely natural. It makes me feel really good."

There were difficulties. "Carmen and I probably had more pressure than usual when we were starting our relationship," Matthew acknowledges. "I had to be sure that I could love Aaron as well. He would have been very hurt if he felt he was getting everything and then it all went wrong and that chap in mummy's life suddenly went away. But Aaron is a lovely lad and you can't help loving him."

"People ask us about where Aaron will stay when we go on our honeymoon. It has never crossed my mind or Carmen's that he wouldn't come with us. He is becoming my son and I am becoming his father. So of course he will come along."

Matthew was not the only person to find himself taking on more than usual when he popped the question. His own parents realised that they too would need to be imaginative. John Middleditch, Matthew's father, recalls meeting the couple. "My wife, Susan, and Matthew's godmother were there. The comment of one lady to the other was: 'It looks like you are going to be instant grandparents.' They had seen the chemistry, put two and two together and got five."

At first the Middleditches were apprehensive. Matthew is 25, Carmen 34. He was educated at public school and had followed his father's footsteps in joining the forces. His comfortable upbringing in the Home Counties does not immediately sit easily

with Carmen's life as a single mother, living in north-east London and relying on a secretary's salary to raise Aaron.

"Until they declared their intention to get married," John Middleditch says, "I would honestly have counselled Matthew to think, think and think again."

Meanwhile, Carmen was also worried. "I absolutely dreaded the prospect of meeting his parents. I believed they would hate me the minute they saw me. I tried to put myself in their shoes and imagine the picture they might have of me. Although I have to say, if they had any preconceived ideas about me, they didn't show them, because they went out of their way to make me feel welcome."

"I remember when I went down for the weekend the first time, the atmosphere was a little tense, but I decided to be myself. Matthew's father said to me: 'You're a bad influence on my son.' I thought 'oh dear'. He said: 'You're a bad influence because he is smoking.' So I said: 'Hang on. It's the other way around. Until I met him I hadn't smoked for a year. Now I'm smoking 20 a day thanks to your son.' From then on, the weekend was really good."

John Middleditch's biggest surprise was not, in fact, meeting Carmen. "I remember a little voice cried out and said: 'Mummy', I looked down, saw this chirpy little face and realised there was more to all this than met the eye."

Yet, despite these initial reservations, everyone is getting on well now. "Aaron will

call us exactly what any natural offspring would call his grandparents – grandma and grandpa," John Middleditch proudly declares. Aaron will be christened on the wedding day in the same village church as Matthew was himself christened and the Middleditches were married.

But some adjustment is still needed. "I was a little poleaxed by the news," says Mr Middleditch, 52. "Normally when you become a grandfather, you have time to prepare. There is the arrival of the baby two years before it starts shouting out your name. I was dealt a fait accompli. He is a bright little five-year-old, sparky and innocent, keen to please and converse. But at first we didn't know the toys he likes. It takes a while for two old fogies like us to get on his wavelength. It's a challenge for him and for us."

"Aaron is perfectly at home with them," Carmen says. "They always make a fuss of him. At Christmas, they bought him a kit for making a gingerbread house. John, Sue and Aaron spent hours making the house together. It was great." For Carmen, this modern way of creating a family has brought her a husband, a father for her son and in-laws with whom she is still feeling her way. But it is not all so new for her. She also had the experience of acquiring a new father.

"My mother split up from my natural father when I was eight," she says, "and we didn't see him again. So there were four of us. I was the eldest and the others were seven, six and five. We were wild. We did

as we pleased. Then my mum got remarried to Roland and they subsequently had another child together. Corinne is technically my half-sister though I have never thought of her in that way."

Roland began bringing in rules and laying down the law. At the time I resented him, but now I am a parent I really admire and respect him for what he did. If it wasn't for him I probably wouldn't have turned out as well as I have. I think of him as my dad. He is my dad. He has devoted the best years of his life to bringing us up."

So what makes these modern-day extended families work? The first condition is obvious – the will to make them work. Perhaps most important is the presence of men who like children and are prepared to become parents to them even when there is no blood link – be it as fathers or grandfathers. Matthew, John and Roland all break with the traditional stereotype of step-fathers as problematic, indeed potentially dangerous to children. Without them, Aaron would have neither a father nor a single grandfather, since he is out of contact with all his male blood relatives.

Roland will be there to finish the job when Carmen marries in the summer. "Over the years, he has worried over me and cried over me. I know that," she says. "Now, he is very proud of me. He wants to give me away and help pay for the wedding." John and Matthew will each take up their roles. Aaron will be christened. It will be a fresh start.

## Doc Martens are flying the flag for England

By Melanie Rickey

THEY'VE been adopted by women, lauded by pop stars and even ordered in bulk by the Pope. It's years since Doctor Martens were thought of as footwear fit only for a bower boy, but now all the old connotations of violence and football fan aggression could well be revived.

Dr Martens is selling a version of its classic eight-hole boot customised with flags to trade on the patriotism created by the World Cup. Come June and the start of the tournament, will we see row upon row of xenophobic feet stomping out a patriotic chant? Might there not be a moment when they stop stomping and start stamping on the heads of the rival fans?

Gary Nelson of the Professional Footballers' Association thinks if that happens in France this summer, it won't be the fault of the boots. "If it [violence] is going to happen it will happen. It's nothing to do with what boots a person is wearing," he says. "It's the person inside the boots."

This is not the first time that Doctor Martens has marketed patriotic boots. It says it is merely responding to a demand for boots which feature flags. "We have sold customised Union Jack boots for a long time, at least three or four years, and are enjoying success with boots featuring the European Union and US flags too," said a company representative. Denmark and Norway (among the first to qualify for the World Cup) have already bought and sold thousands of beflagged boots, and Jamaica, which has just qualified, should be next.

The flag might be the thing which convinces a fan to buy, but any Doc devotee will tell you that no boot could be better for all those hours hanging around a football stadium. First favoured by builders for their comfortable heat-sealed air cushioned soles, Dr Martens became a fashion phenomenon in the Seventies when skinheads appropriated the 1460 ankle boot (still the biggest seller) as uniform. Today, the factories, based in the Midlands, make 220,000 pairs of shoes and boots a day, meeting demand for a market that was worth £57m in 1991, and a whopping £250m in 1997.

The company is closely involved with fashion sponsorship: the St Martin's MA graduation which rounds off London Fashion Week will benefit from its patronage, as will the designer Sonja Nuttall, who is using the classic six-eyel Derby boot for her forthcoming show because of their timeless, androgynous, appeal. Last season the company sponsored fashion newcomer Andrew Groves. Add to that the Dr Martens football league, a grass-roots semi professional organisation based in the Midlands, and you have a brand that means something to everyone.



Booting the colour: the new look

## Each new departure is a matter that naturally interests us



JOHN  
LYTTLE

CAN journalists write about death – their own deaths – in the unworthy medium of newspapers? The late Ruth Picardie did in *The Observer* and struck a major chord. The seriously ill John Diamond does in *The Times* and provides a comprehension others would do well to emulate. It's all there: rage, rejection, sobbing, laughing, self-pity, sentimentality, courage and chemotherapy. What any sentient being would expect. This old news that is somehow forever new. All that's fit to print. The older you grow, the more you appreciate death. I wouldn't say understand, because it's obvious, isn't it. Ruth Picardie and John Diamond handled the quicksilver of their lives, and it's both a valid and senseless exercise. Simply put, what they – what we – try to sort out is if death is the Big Question or the Big Answer. Who's sure? Who could be?

Decca Aitkenhead. In this month's *Modern Review* she accuses Ruth and John of, I guess, putting on an act, exploiting their own suffering. Decca looks

such cheap crowd-pleasing – including Ruth's sister, Justine. A crowd pleasing industry is being created, apparently. A cheat of a "cancer" school: newspaper, it transpires, just can't deal with death, Decca says.

You can see why certain pundits say Decca is out to create a reputation and screw the hurt inflicted. And the pundits may have a point. Decca's an ex-colleague – as was Ruth – and I like her enormously. She's incorrigibly smart. But I'd be a liar if I pretended that one of the things I liked most wasn't a determination to be noticed.

Still, let's grant Decca what she denies others, while on so rationally ascribing the basest of motives. Let's give her the benefit of the doubt. I'd much prefer to view "Before They Say Goodbye", with its evasions, omissions and muddle, as denial. For though Decca declares that writing about death in a newspaper is tawdry, voyeuristic entertainment, the interesting thing is that she painstakingly duplicates the crime. Why? Perhaps because death threatens that sense of invulnerability those in their

twenties enjoy. (Oh, to have it back.) Or perhaps "Before They Say Goodbye" is Decca's wholly unconscious address to her mother, whom she lost young. Or perhaps it is a scam: if these souls are brave for detailing their demises, how much braver am I for having a go?

Whatever, intoning Decca's "can't do this" is genuflecting to her sloppiest notion: that there exists a "correct" way to write about death, and Ruth and John failed/failed morally, ethically and, get this, aesthetically. And as human history proves, this is ... Crap. There is no right way. No wrong way. Only your way.

So, denial. Nothing else fully explains – or excuses – Decca's inability to grasp what might appear clear to the rest of us. For instance, when Ruth joked about being "privileged to live through the era of John Frieda Restructuring Serum" it's "sugared tragedy" ... any line that edged towards the unbearable was softened by a sweetener. A sweetener, or may be just ... gallows humour? A coping mechanism that the world is not merely fa-

milial with, but often sees beyond, to shadows behind. Yes, gallows humour protects. Duh. It also affords a fleeting glimpse. It has to be fleeting. We nag at death, yet no philosopher, no religion, no work of art has cracked it

Does anyone seriously believe newspapers should ban reporting on them? And surely Decca knows that once a piece is written how individuals respond to it is beyond the author's control for grabs? Witness reaction to "Before They Say Goodbye". This column frequently dashes itself against death, as regular readers are aware. Death from AIDS, suicide, in the family, among friends. Decca

once said she was a regular reader too, yet I find myself co-opted into unkind equations, condemned for writing about Ruth and rushing to "claim bereavement status". I honestly have no idea how to rebut that. All I can say is that I wrote about Ruth to hold on to her a while longer. Foolish, granted. I'll own up to this, also. Part of me is enraged by Decca's sophistry, by the fact that she's been brought on too fast and the

cracks are showing. Consider: an entire "school" of cancer is revived, as it two columns – one column, now – constituted a movement of bathos and "bad taste". Well, death is in very bad taste indeed, and, besides, schools grow. This one shrinks. And there are worse forms of cancer journalism to fret over. While Decca is busy conjuring a corrupt marketplace she forgets *The Modern Review* and its brand of arrested adolescence, where apostles jostle to out-do the faux "plain speaking" of Julie Burchill, carping at dulleads exploring their mortality, but otherwise happy to force "unwarranted intimacy" by dish the dirt on her abortions. Go figure.

Go figure, too, why deceased *Guardian* columnist Oscar Moore is exempted for telling us about HIV, and how this has nothing to do with Decca working at *The Guardian*, but because Oscar was writing about "a new disease ... and cancer has no mystery." (Huh?) Actually, by the time Oscar wrote about AIDS it was hardly "new". And I'd wager that a quick vox pop would raise doubts as to which sickness passers-by are more in-

formed about. But Decca could be sorting out something deeper here. From start to finish, she conflates and confuses cancer and death while pretending division. Perhaps because cancer killed her mother. May be she must establish a distinction, even at the bewildering cost of AIDS good/cancer bad.

Come. The cause of death is (mainly) immaterial. What draws and repels us is the process; this common yet unique journey we all must take. Decca supposedly stares death down, but she's the one, not Ruth, not John, averting eyes – and heart and intellect.

A proposition. Death has many rituals but very few rules. Arbitrarily imposing some you've prepared earlier is cruel, not least to one's self. Or ... hell? Who knows? I don't. What can be said for certain is life's too short. Which is sort of Decca's point, too, so let's expect her to get it any day soon. And if I over-estimate, then I can at least look forward to when Decca finally reveals the "proper" method, and I can at last learn, turn and confront my own legion of demons.

## We're shown up again. For once, Britain should follow the French



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The French government has just announced approval for a new high-speed rail link east of Paris, cutting journey times to Strasbourg by an hour and a half. That's France: a socialist government, dreams of glory and tons of Euro-sentiment (the train, said a minister would "optimise links between the axes of the Rhine and the Rhone"). Transport officials in this country don't talk that way. But that doesn't stop them getting out of their depth. This country, too, has its share of grand projects which run over time and over cost – the Jubilee Line in London being the most egregious current example. Yet we lack transport imagination, understanding transport infrastructure as a whole, planning and thinking strategically. Especially now that the plan for building a fast link to the Channel Tunnel has collapsed. It has to be revived, cherished and re-figured.

Forget the nominal transport minister, Gavin Strang. The man on the mat is John

Prescott, Secretary of State for Environment, Transport and the Regions. Commissions. He is, by nature, a big spender who is marooned in a Cabinet where financial rectitude rules. He is a big-picture man, yet only in the minutest phraseology of intricate contracts is the dream of public-private financial partnership ever likely to be realised. It is he who has to put together transport and sustainable development: who but John Prescott is to see that new rail terminal at St Pancras, not to mention Stratford could serve to jump-start that "brownfield" building which is supposed to be the alternative to dumping concrete on the green belt.

Fate – the paucity of imagination and conceptual confusions of the Thatcher and Major government, to be precise – has stacked Mr Prescott's in-tray high. The clock is ticking down to formal revocation of London and Continental Railways' contract. Replacements are knocking at DETR's door, eager to state terms. But

they all involve substantial extra public money, either directly (EuroRail is asking for more than £2bn, most of it upfront) or indirectly (Railtrack would like to negotiate a cross-subsidy from higher track usage charges elsewhere). Meanwhile, the Government faces the prospect of re-acquiring formal ownership of Eurostar, the company running cross-Channel services: public ownership is also the option if railway franchises fail to live up to their contractual obligations.

Behind all this lies a term unstated in all the rhetoric about Private Finance Initiatives, contracting-out and privatisation. It's what happens when private capital fails. Theoretically, contracts can be re-let and new providers brought in. But what happens in the meantime and what if the new contractors use the threat of a break in service to blackmail the state? That is John Prescott's position now.

The Government could, it is true, abandon the idea of a fast link to the Chan-

nel. With it probably goes the profitability of Eurostar, a boost to economic growth thanks to better through-routes from Birmingham, Manchester, Scotland and Ireland, let alone the specific benefits to London's East End of making Stratford once again a great transport node. But how much additional investment of public money is all that worth?

The answer, in principle, must surely be no less than the £2bn figure being bandied around – albeit payable over a period of years, which would not need to start till after that magic hour on 1 April 1999 when Labour's commitment to Tory spending plans comes to an end. But Mr Prescott and the Treasury ministers he eventually has to convince know there is a more important question than how much money. It is how to assure the state that private sector partners are reliable, at least more reliable than the members of the LCR consortium. Their ranks include two existing rail franchisees, National Express and

Virgin and if, after what has happened, their conduct of their railways is not brought under the closest inspection by ministers, they ought to be. Richard Branson may have emerged from the libel courts a people's hero; he may be Mr Blair's most acceptable capitalist face. But Mr Branson the blond controller needs policing.

Once, when Labour first came to power in this country, the talk was of the state taking over great chunks of private capital. During the Thatcher era, private capital could do no wrong – the best the state could do was retreat. We surely now know better. In large-scale infrastructure projects neither the state nor private capital is superior as financier or manager. But we have learnt the hard way that the state is indispensable, as projector, guarantor and backstop. Exactly how much the Government should spend on the fast link to the Channel is up for negotiation; but it can and should commit itself now to the principle of full-blooded participation.

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number. Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

## LETTERS

### Assault on Iraq

Bombing Iraq will be immoral, impractical, and unjust. Immoral for killing people without justification. Impractical because we won't get all the sites. Unjust because the rationale stems from an unbalanced political view of the region.

This is the last throw of an ineffective UN/US/UK policy. Iraq can easily re-acquire chemical and biological, if not nuclear, weapons after an inspection.

The UK must think and speak for herself, however friendly we may be towards America. We should develop a new policy based on assistance and support for the people of Iraq and a proper military balance in the region.

We should realise that sanctions are confirming anti-Western attitudes in the minds of ordinary people in Iraq and in other Middle Eastern states, commence an aid initiative aimed at support and development for Iraq, rather like that undertaken by America and others for Germany after 1945, and take our improved status with the Arabs as an opportunity to help ease tension between the Arab world and Israel, to improve prospects for peace in the region.

JOHN DEXTER  
Hythe, Hampshire

What guarantees can the Prime Minister offer that the following scenario will not occur?

After a bombing campaign by the US and its allies, Saddam grants the UN inspectors unfettered access to all the sites that they wish to examine. Then after several months he throws them out on some trumped-up charge, forcing the West once again to mount a military response.

Meanwhile it is powerless Iraqi civilians that will have to suffer the mayhem of these bombing campaigns in addition to the suffering already imposed upon them through economic sanctions.

HASSAN ABDULRAZZAK  
New Malden, Surrey

In the first half of this century, this nation had to make a second enormous sacrifice of blood and treasure to prevent an evil dictator from running amok, mainly because the international organisations created after the first holocaust, and the national powers concerned, lacked the courage and sense to take timely preventive measures.

I find it difficult to see any moral distinction between the arguments of some Anglican bishops (letter, 11 February) and



those of the "peace at any price" advocates who forced me to waste six of the best years of my life, and many of my contemporaries to give their lives or limbs, in the dirty war required to exterminate the plague of Nazism.

LEWIS STRETCH  
Godmanchester, Cambridgeshire

Your front page leader (12 February) speculates that perhaps President Bush should have pursued the defeated Iraqi army to Baghdad seven years ago and overthrown Saddam Hussein.

You may recall that no sooner had the Iraqi army been ejected from Kuwait than the chattering classes started wailing about America's "hidden agenda" and how overthrowing Saddam Hussein was not part of the UN's mandate. America and her allies were thus forced to withdraw with the job half done.

SUSAN COELHO  
Teddington, Middlesex

What is it about the Labour Party that, when it achieves power, it rushes to support

even foolish and murderous aspects of American foreign policy? Did Labour learn nothing from its disgraceful support of the Vietnam war? Is this meant to be socialism?

LAWRENCE HANSEN  
London SE1

### 'Lost' Prince John

Your report "Revealed: the lost prince of the House of Windsor" (11 February) is shocking not simply because Prince John was hidden away because he had epilepsy or because he died suddenly and unexpectedly in 1919 at the age of 13 and was buried "very privately", but because eighty years ago approximately 1,000 people die from epilepsy every year. This is the same as the combined annual mortality for cot deaths and Aids.

Most of these deaths are of young people, like the Prince, who "fell asleep" after a seizure and never woke up. It is also true that until very recently these deaths were kept hidden. The death certificates in many

cases would not reveal the cause of death as epilepsy. Indeed, until very recently few people were prepared to talk about sudden death in epilepsy. Although you state that Prince John's seizures had increased in severity and frequency before he died, and indeed that Queen Mary wrote that his death "came as a great release", Epilepsy Bureaucracy knows of many young people who have died whose condition has been considered sufficiently mild not to warrant medication.

Epilepsy affects 1.5 million people in the UK at some time in their lives, especially during childhood and old age. Yet the illness attracts little by way of research money – 20p per sufferer each year, compared to £250 per person with muscular dystrophy and £140 for multiple sclerosis. Current epilepsy services are inadequate; 40 per cent of people with epilepsy are seen by general physicians who have no training in neurology. The case for a national inquiry is that with improved management of seizures these tragic

deaths of young people may be prevented.

JANE HANNA  
Director, Epilepsy Bureaucracy  
PO Box 1777  
Bournemouth, BH5 1YR  
Dorset

Your feature on the photo albums of the Duke of Windsor is fascinating and very welcome, but Prince John is not a "lost prince".

Royal children in the early years of this century were not exposed to the kind of publicity their descendants face today; but, far from being hidden, Prince John's existence and appearance were made known to the public through photographs.

I have 17 old picture postcards showing the Prince on his own, and a further 35 of him with a brother or sister, or in larger groups. These date from 1905, the year he was born, to 1916. Other photographs appeared in magazines, newspapers and books.

Too often the story of Prince John is used as evidence that the Royal Family were unnaturally

cold and unfeeling to their children: your reporters are not the first to suggest that he was hidden away as an embarrassment. George V and Queen Mary gave him the best and most loving treatment any parents could have provided, by the standards of the day. Kept safe within the protective circle of the family, John commuted from London to Windsor, to Balmoral and Sandringham, with his brothers and sister, and he did meet visitors and play with other children.

Theodore Roosevelt met him at Buckingham Palace in 1911, and described a solid, cheery little boy with no fear of his father. It was only in 1917 that John was moved to Wood Farm on doctors' advice, because his fits had become so frequent and so severe, and it was obvious that he did not have long to live. He was accompanied by the nurse who had looked after him from birth, and his family kept in close touch and visited regularly.

CHARLOTTE ZEEVAT  
Pett, East Sussex

### Business rates

Simon Sperry is wrong to assume his business rates were high in 1989 because his local authority levied them (letter, 11 February).

The amount a business pays in rates depends on the location; if the rateable value of the land the business occupies is high, its rates will be high. Returning the business rate to council control would not mean that the burden is shifted from residents to businesses, or vice versa; levels of domestic and non-domestic rates would be linked to ensure that one does not subsidise the other.

At present, businesses have no input into the level of rates they pay – returning the business rate would improve democracy. For local government to modernise, it must be able to represent all the community. Financial autonomy is a vital part of that modernisation.

SIR JEREMY BEECHAM  
Chair  
Local Government Association  
London SW1

### Pyramid publishing

Three cheers for Boyd Tonkin ("The real mystery of the Sphinx; why do falsehoods drive out truth?", 10 February), who goes straight to the heart of the matter of the huge increase in "alternative Egyptology" publications.

Most subjects have their shadowy sisters which feed on the lack of knowledge. These are tolerated, humoured or ignored by the academic world; think of alternative medicine, the authorship of Shakespeare's plays, or alchemy. Their popularity may reflect the public's healthy distrust of being told "This is how it is, and there can be no argument about it." Publishers have rarely missed an opportunity to capitalise on it. But we should wake up to the real possibility that Egyptology as a serious subject gets confused in the public perception with theories which range from unorthodox to loony, and which at best ask questions without being able to provide satisfactory answers.

I have no problems explaining why the Egyptians built their pyramids, but could somebody please tell me why we are going to have the Millennium Dome?

JAROMIR MALEK  
Griffith Institute  
Ashmolean Museum  
Oxford

Boyd Tonkin castigates book publishers for encouraging New Age nonsense about ancient Egypt to flourish – and rightly so. But what about the motive in his own eye?

The American Egyptologist Mark Lehner knows a thing or two about the Sphinx and the pyramids, having spent 20 years studying them in the field. Yet when he publishes a popular book on the subject (*The Complete Pyramids*, Thames and Hudson, 1997), packed with new ideas and verifiable information, what do the broadsheet literary editors do? They ignore him.

COLIN RIDLER  
Archaeology Editor  
Thames and Hudson Ltd  
London WC1

### Testing athletes

If the world's sporting authorities are so determined to stamp out drug use ("Champ fails drug test", 12 February), can we assume that they will also regularly test for traces of alcohol and nicotine in athletes?

LESLEY BROWNE  
London SW1

## On the day before tomorrow, some tender thoughts from little Ginger far away



MILES KINGDON

My thanks to all those good and great who have taken space in the column this year to send their Valentine's Day messages. Not only does it bring me a tidy bit of income (and all tax-free!), it also saves me from having to write anything today. So here we go with our Grand St Valentine's Day Parade!

To Tonytumps – Bombs Awa y! You can come back to our little White House as often as you like! – his little Billikins.

LITTLE Tonykins – my very best wishes for doing everything I asked you to, and more! all my love, as long as you keep doing it! May the Sun keep provisionally shining on you ... Rupe

Salman ... we will meet again ... I am looking for you the whole time ... I am on your trail ... my aim is true ... from you know who ...

Darling – Though I am only five foot two,

And wear a ginger beard. Although I'm very serious And look a trifle weird. Although I'm going bald on top And wear thick horny specs, It's lots of love from me to you, Your Ginger Foreign Sex ...

A reader writes: Dear Mr Kingdon, Don't tell me you're going to fill the whole column with these pathetic mock-political Valentines! Everyone does this, for heaven's sake! Can't you do something else.

Miles Kingdon writes: Like what?

A reader writes: Well, like turn your attention to some of the serious issues of the day!

Miles Kingdon writes: Like which?

A reader writes: Like the impending war with Saddam Hussein. Can you tell us what's going to happen?

Miles Kingdon writes: Sure. They can't declare military action against Saddam Hus-

sein until they've decided on a name for the War.

A reader writes: A name?

Miles Kingdon writes: That's right. A war fought by the Americans has to be packaged first – all the press rights sold, all the advertising sewn up, film rights auctioned off in Hollywood, all the big dealers signed up. And the biggest problem is how to brand-name a war. Great War was a brilliant name for a war. So was World War, even though a lot of the world wasn't involved in any world war. Cold War was a brilliant name for a peace, too. The trouble is, they've been through all this before when they liberated Kuwait, and so this time all the good names like Gulf War and Desert Storm have already been used up. They can't call it Gulf War II or Son of Gulf War, because they know that sequels never do

as well. So it's not Robin Cook they're waiting for – they can't start bombarding Iraq till they have got the name they need.

A reader writes: Hmmm ... Talking of Robin Cook, Gaynor is a funny kind of name, isn't it? Have you ever come across a woman called Gaynor?

Miles Kingdon writes: Yes. The film actress, Mitzi Gaynor.

A reader writes: Oh, right ...! Funny kind of name, Mitzi. Ever come across another woman ...?

Miles Kingdon writes: Look, if you haven't got any intelligent questions, I get back to my Valentine's Day messages?

A reader writes: Yes, just one more question. What kind of a name was Dodi? Was there any Englishman who ever had a name like that?

Miles Kingdon: Yes. Ken Dodd.

A reader writes: Ken Dodd isn't much like Dodi.

Miles Kingdon writes: No, but Dodi is known familiarly up North as Diddy, and in fact when Diana first started going out with Dodi, most of the North of England thought she was going out with Ken Dodd. Some still do, as a matter of fact, and that headline the other day, "I had Dodi's baby", caused a great fuss in parts of Lancashire. Any more questions?

A reader writes: No. You can get back to your tired old Valentine Day parodies now.

Miles Kingdon writes: Thanks ... Queen Mumski ... Cheers! Bottoms up! Let's drink to it ... Whoops! ... love from Boriskins ... RICHARD BRANSON I love you I love you I love you! from Richard Branson ... Continued next year



## Rupert Murdoch features in three challenges to Blair



DONALD  
MACINTYRE  
THE GENTLE ART  
OF COMPROMISE

Rupert Murdoch – even since the spectacular defection of the *Sun* to its cause – still haunts the collective psyche of much of the Labour Party. Three unresolved issues, currently exercising the government's best minds, all have features in common, of which Mr Murdoch's looming presence, real or perceived, is only one. The newspaper industry has a direct commercial interest in the outcome of each. The public is less interested in them than the newspapers would like them to be. And finally, Tony Blair has directly focussed his lawyer's mind on all of them.

The first concerns the trade unions and how to put into practice the manifesto promise to give statutory recognition rights to unions that have the support of "51 per cent of the relevant workforce". It's well known that the meaning of that innocuous-sounding phrase is now a matter of direct dispute between the TUC, who argue that it means 51 per cent of those voting in any ballot, and the CBI, who insist that it means 51 per cent of those eligible to vote. This sets a very high hurdle. There are modernisers within the Government who sympathise quite strongly with the CBI view, who worry about the risk to inward investment of too effective a measure on union recognition, who might not be too unhappy about a public break with the TUC and who believe, bluntly, that union organisation is the unions' business, not the government's. There are also those, including some quite prominent cabinet members, who believe that the CBI demand is unreasonable and that the White Paper this spring will have to find a compromise. It's likely for example, that David Blunkett, who played some part in the drafting of the manifesto wording, would prefer a minimum level of turnout in a recognition ballot – say 30 per cent. As it happens, Rupert Murdoch's desire – entirely matched by that of his rivals – not to see the old print unions return to the newspaper industry hasn't been mentioned in the internal discussions so far about the issue. And it is much less relevant than many in the party think. But there are Labour MPs who persist in believing it is upmost in some ministers' minds. It will probably take weeks rather than days for the discussions to reach a conclusion.

The second is the issue of privacy and the press. This is of obsessive interest to other newspaper groups beside Mr Murdoch's and arises because the Human Rights Bill which goes to the Commons on Monday, incorporates, among the other articles of the European Convention of Human Rights, a right to privacy as well as a balancing right to free expression. Fearing that the Press Complaints Commission as a public authority could now be judged by the British courts not to be adequately protective of citizens against the intrusion of the press, the PCC's chairman is

now seeking its exemption from the terms of the Bill. In particular he wishes to guard against judgments which rule that the PCC should have restrained newspapers in advance from publication. Last Monday at a meeting between the Prime Minister, Lord Irvine (the justly proud author of the Bill in its present form), Jack Straw and Chris Smith, it was agreed that Charles Falconer, the Solicitor General, should apply his forensic mind to examine ways of amending the Bill to accommodate some of the PCC's concerns. This will not abolish the right to privacy in the Bill, and it will not preclude the possibility of future privacy legislation. But it will still look to the Government's critics like tampering with the Bill in order to satisfy the owners of tabloid newspapers.

The last, of course, is predatory pricing. And here Mr Murdoch, and the cut-price *Times*, is indisputably the protagonist. This week's decision by the Lords to amend the Competition Bill to outlaw the use of below cost pricing to hurt competitors, including *The Independent*, was a considerable embarrassment to the Government. The standard reaction to a Lords defeat, namely that it demonstrates the need to reform the Upper House, was simply not available. It was Labour life peers who rebelled, and Liberal Democrats, as a matter of policy, who led the charge against the government, and presumably would have done whatever the composition of the House. It also frankly strains credulity to say, as one junior member of the Government unblinkingly told me this week, that the Labour rebellion consisted of luvvies and trendy middle-class intellectuals. It's true that two new Labour working peers, Lord (Richard) Rodgers and Lord Putnam, just about fall into that category. But Lord (Jack) Ashley? or that redoubtable Brummie Lord (Dennis) Howell? Clever men, yes. Middle-class intellectuals? Hardly. Again there are strong feelings within the Labour Party in the Commons. The former Director General of the Office of Fair Trading Lord Borrie, Mirror Group Newspapers Director, and Labour peer is convinced that the need for diversity, so should the Competition Bill provisions on predatory pricing. The Labour MP Chris Mullin is thinking of joining his colleague Giles Radice (both are highly influential MPs) in backing the Lords amendment with a similar one in the Commons, though he will probably not finally decide whether to do so until he has fully examined the Government's case.

There are possible compromises of varying effectiveness in all three cases. On privacy, if the Government does produce the exemption that the PCC – unnecessarily in the view of some lawyers – is seeking, it will surely (at long last) have to come up with a system of compensation for individuals who have been wronged by newspapers invading their privacy. On predatory pricing, the Government is quite likely to reword the Bill, though that does not necessarily mean the full scale enquiry into the predatory pricing Mr Murdoch's critics most want. On unions the participation threshold – though one probably significantly higher than 30 per cent – offers a possible compromise. The eventual outcome will probably not dramatically or immediately affect the level of union recognition in industry. It will probably not satisfy either the CBI or the TUC. But there is a good chance that it will also not lead to a full-scale confrontation with either. Some habits die hard. Like it or not, of all three issues, it is union recognition that in the long run will matter most in the Parliamentary Labour Party.

## Oswald, Enoch and David – Britain demands more than charisma



DAVID  
AARONOVITCH  
DIFFERENT CAREERS,  
SIMILAR LESSONS

In March 1925, a crack unit of the British Fascists – a forerunner to the British Union of Fascists – kidnapped the Communist leader, Harry Pollitt. On the continent Mussolini was consolidating his hold on power, and Hitler was being released from prison where he had completed *Mein Kampf*. So Mr Pollitt might have expected the worst – to share the recent violent fate of the Italian socialist, Matteotti. Instead, according to the historian Roger Eatwell, he was released by the embarrassed fascists, who told the judge at their subsequent trial that he had accepted £5 by way of compensation for his inconvenience. Britain was, somehow, different.

This difference really struck home this week, when a coincidence of events led me to think about charismatic political leaders in this country. First, last Sunday, Enoch Powell died. Immediately tributes in many newspapers testified to the unique qualities of an exceptional man.

Then, today, the *New Statesman* publishes an interview with Dr David Owen, in which he says that he might return to active politics because "it is hard to stand aside on such an issue as the single currency, when I believe that what is at stake is the whole history of this country". Excited Eurosceptics (often the same people as those posthumously praising old Enoch) have instantly begun to talk about Owen leading the anti-Euro crusade.

And finally, last night saw the first part of Laurence Marks' and Maurice Gran's enjoyable TV bio-drama of Sir Oswald Mosley ("Leader, Fascist, Adulterer" as the blurb put it). So in one week three great lost leaders made demands once more upon our attention. All three were once held in the kind of regard by some of their contemporaries that most politicians never experience. All three were said to possess rare intellectual gifts, to be prophets standing above party and beyond compromise, to be in direct contact with the soul of the nation. And, in Powell's words, to be odd men out.

Mosley was a stirring orator and possessed – as the Marks and Gran films make clear – a combination of bril-

liance and the attention span of a gnat. He was essentially a moderniser, arguing through the inter-war recessions for New Deal Keynesianism. His impatience with Labour's impossible gradualism, and his gigantic ego, led him – via byways – to the fashionable creed of Fascism, with its impressive colours and cult of absolute leaders. His anti-Semitism was not much more than a populist accretion, though that was of little comfort to the Jewish population of Britain.

Powell was no fascist, of course. He too was a moderniser, a man whose intellect had led him to embrace a free market philosophy and to reject the agreed statism that was a feature of the post-war consensus. Like Mosley, he was a beacon to younger, technocratic politicians, impatient with the status quo. He himself had, by 1968, resigned from the Cabinet once, and refused to serve in a shadow cabinet under Alec Douglas-Home.

And, also like Mosley (but in greater contradiction to his free market views) he adopted the language of race and nation when it suited him to do so. It was not – as his apologist wish to claim – cold logic or unwavering commitment



Adulation by the few is not enough: Sir Oswald Mosley inspects his troops, 1934

played the game," he later said, somewhat disingenuously. In 1974 he urged a Labour vote over the EEC, and subsequently became an Ulster Unionist MP.

Owen's history is more familiar and more recent. He was another future Prime Minister, another impatient, handsome technocrat, this

they failed, all three turned to some form of sectionalism, to ancient nationalism and – in the case of Powell and Mosley, to racism. It is interesting to note that what is at stake for Owen is "the whole history of this country", not its whole future. And yet, for all their qualities and capacity to stir the blood, they have all been

pious of those who refuse to play the party game. The anti-Bonapartist streak in British political life – the same streak that made England so relieved to see the back of the Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell – penalises the man or woman without a party. Mosley's failure was partly due to the suspicious among right-wing Tories about him personally and about his infinite capacity for disloyalty. Powell was never forgiven by the Conservative party for his lack of collegiate discipline – and could never construct a powerbase outside it. David Owen's inability to stay in any political party that was imperfect cost him the highest office.

In one of the Mosley films Marks and Gran have a Tory friend of Mosley, the MP Bob Boothby, warn the future fascist leader that Britain "is an old country". So it is. It is a country where racial intolerance is not really respectable, where leadership is always constrained, where a single currency is not an issue of life or death, and where fascists give their opponents £5 to cover inconvenience.

*'Mosley: leader, fascist, adulterer', Thursdays, Channel 4, 9pm.*

All three men were said to possess rare intellectual gifts, to be prophets standing above party and beyond compromise, to be in direct contact with the soul of the nation

time of the centre. The failure of various parties to comprehend his message – and to act upon it – took him through Labour, into the Mark 1 SDP, and when that merged with the Liberals into the Mark 2 SDP, which then folded. And now he may be contemplating a return to battle, with further European integration as the *casus belli*.

The similarities really are striking, even if one should be careful to note the differences – there has never been a suggestion that David Owen is anything other than a committed anti-racist. All three men were frustrated modernisers, questing for some way of achieving the power to realise their objectives. As

failures. There was no Powellite movement after 1968, no Fascist MPs elected in the Thirties, no successful Owenite organisation.

At best two of them have acted as reluctant John the Baptists to politicians who assiduously played and won the party game – Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair. And it says something interesting about this country that this should be so. For all the talk about our disillusionment with party politicians, we are far more sus-

## How can we learn what's in the food we're about to eat?



FRAN  
ABRAMS  
MANIPULATED  
SOYA BEANS

When you get five minutes, why not take a look through your kitchen cupboards? Like most discerning consumers, you probably think you make positive choices about what you eat. But do you know that within a couple of years most of the processed food you buy will contain genetically modified soya designed to survive spraying with weedkiller?

There are major changes taking place in the way our food is produced. British shoppers have indicated they are suspicious of them. Ministers have expressed similar doubts. Just this week they blocked the planting of these crops in Britain and also declared their

soya goes into 60 per cent of the processed food we eat. Soya flour is used to lengthen shelf-life and improve colour in bread, pizza bases, pastry crusts, biscuits and noodles. Soya oil is used in cooking oil, margarine and spreads. And a third substance, soya lecithin, is used as an emulsifier or stabiliser, and to improve "mouth feel" in products such as mayonnaise and even chocolate.

Although it is just one of a number of modified crops now being developed, soya is the farthest forward. Within the next few years, we will also see modified maize, sugar beet and oilseed rape, among others, produced mainly by half a dozen big biotechnology companies.

Ask Joe Public whether he wants to eat genetically modified food, and the answer will usually be "No", as a number of surveys have shown. But this story is not about what the public wants. It's about what the public is about to get.

Let us look at how modified soya has come to be developed. Monsanto, an agro-chemical company based in St Louis, sells a highly successful glyphosate-based weedkiller called Roundup, whose US patent runs out in the year 2000. But Monsanto must now be confident that its product will be sold to sell. Why? Because it has developed a modified

soya yields by 7 per cent if they spray with Roundup. Forty per cent of the world's soya is grown in America, including the vast majority of what Britain imports.

But how can Monsanto be sure that farmers won't just buy the beans and spray them with a cheaper imitation brand? This is where it gets clever. Monsanto licenses its technology to seed producers, who then sell on to farmers. Farmers pay a small fee for the use of the seed and also sign an agreement that says they must spray their crops with branded Roundup. By the time the patent runs out, the British Retail Consortium estimates that 90 per cent of the US crop could be treated in this way. Brilliant.

The men from Monsanto say this is not their motivation. To quote Colin Merritt, the company's UK Technical Manager: "We are moving into a business which is based on seed rather than purely based on chemicals. Many of our other developments are entirely different with just seed and no chemical involved." This new technology actually reduces the amount of chemicals sprayed on crops, Mr Merritt explains. And it is approved by the American Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the European Union and the British government.

So where's the beef? Why are the environmentalists making such a big fuss?

Despite the regulatory system's approval, there are some very knowledgeable people who feel we do not yet know enough about the possible health risks involved in a range of modified crops. For example Professor Philip James, author of the proposals for the Government's Food Standards Agency and Director of the Rowett Research Institute at the University of Aberdeen, said on a Scottish BBC documentary this month: "The perception that everything is totally straightforward and safe is totally naive." He added: "Once the BSE problem is solved, if it is solved, then I think that the big public concern is going to be about the huge array of genetic manipulations... and how we tackle that in a proper, responsible way."

And while the FDA is renowned for its tough attitude, it does sometimes approve foods that remain banned in the UK. Crisps made with Olestra, a fat substitute which passes straight through the body but which, it is claimed, can strip the body of essential nutrients and cause stomach cramps or diarrhoea, are on sale in the US but not here.

As yet, there is no clear evidence to suggest genetically modified food is generally dangerous to human health. But, as the Consumers' Association argues, the effects will be hard to discern when we are all eat-

ing the stuff. Jeff Rooker, the Agriculture Minister, says that if the Government had been elected a year or 18 months earlier it might have demanded segregation of these crops. Now he must hope that government research will show there are no potential health problems.

"If they don't come up with something I for one will not be prepared to give robust answers about it all being safe for ever more," he says.

Then there is the question of environmental impact. What if the beans cross-pollinate with wild plants – possibly wild soya – to create indestructible weeds? Monsanto says its gene cannot transfer in this way, but environmentalists have their doubts.

The battle to bring genetically modified soya to Britain now centres on a PR war, pitting the resources of Monsanto against such organisations as the Consumers' Association, Greenpeace and a group called Wholefoods against Genetix Foods. Monsanto employs a PR firm, Lowe Bell, but you will rarely see the company's name on any publicity material. Its representative can be found in the 1997 phone book under Soya Bean Information Centre. If you phone this centre, you will find its name is now the Plant Biotech Information Centre. And it is based at 59 Russell Square, London: the

address of Lowe Bell. Alternatively, the switchboard at Monsanto's headquarters in High Wycombe will put you through there.

Or you might like to get some information from the Food and Drinks Federation's "Food for Our Future" campaign, to which Monsanto says it gives financial support, although the FDF denies this.

What if you still don't like the idea of genetically modified food? This is an issue about consumers' rights, but consumers can only exercise their right to choose what they buy if they are fully informed. And even though the supermarkets plan to label products which contain soya as having genetically modified material in them, they will do so only at the bottom of a list of ingredients, and only when they redesign their packaging.

If ministers are really concerned about this issue, as they say they are, why not insist on tobacco style "health warnings," prominently placed and in large letters? They could say: "Warning: No one really knows what genetically modified food can do to your health."

Then shoppers could make up their own minds about what they want to eat. If Monsanto has won its PR battle for our hearts and minds, we will buy the products regardless. But if it has not, sooner or later they will disappear from our shelves.

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FIT THE BEST

## LCR chiefs to collect £600,000 as taxpayer faces £800m bill

By Michael Harrison

Directors of London & Continental Railways, the failed Channel rail link consortium, are set to collect pay-offs totalling £600,000 while taxpayers face a bill of up to £800m to cover its liabilities. It emerged last night.

The four executive directors, led by chairman Sir Derek Hornby and chief executive Adam Mills, are all on one-year contracts and an LCR spokesman confirmed these would be honoured if the consortium was put into liquidation.

Meanwhile, it became clear that LCR's liabilities, which will revert back to the Government should the consortium be wound up, are far higher than initial estimates.

In addition to taking on LCR's £430m of bank debt, which includes £140m represents the money spent on preparatory work and engineering work on the 68-mile link, the taxpayer would also inherit the consortium's leasing liabilities on its fleet of Eurostar trains. These are understood to total around £275m. Further liabilities relating to work carried out and contracts entered into bring the total to nearly £800m.

In contrast, the liabilities of LCR's eight shareholders, which include Richard Bran-



Adam Mills: Thought to have been paid £200,000

son's Virgin Group, Europe's biggest bank SBC Warburg Dillon Read and Bechtel, America's second biggest construction company, are restricted to the £100m of equity they put in.

An LCR spokesman said yesterday that there was no question of the consortium shouldering any liabilities beyond those it was contractually obliged to accept under the agreement drawn up with Sir George Young, the then Transport Secretary, in 1996.

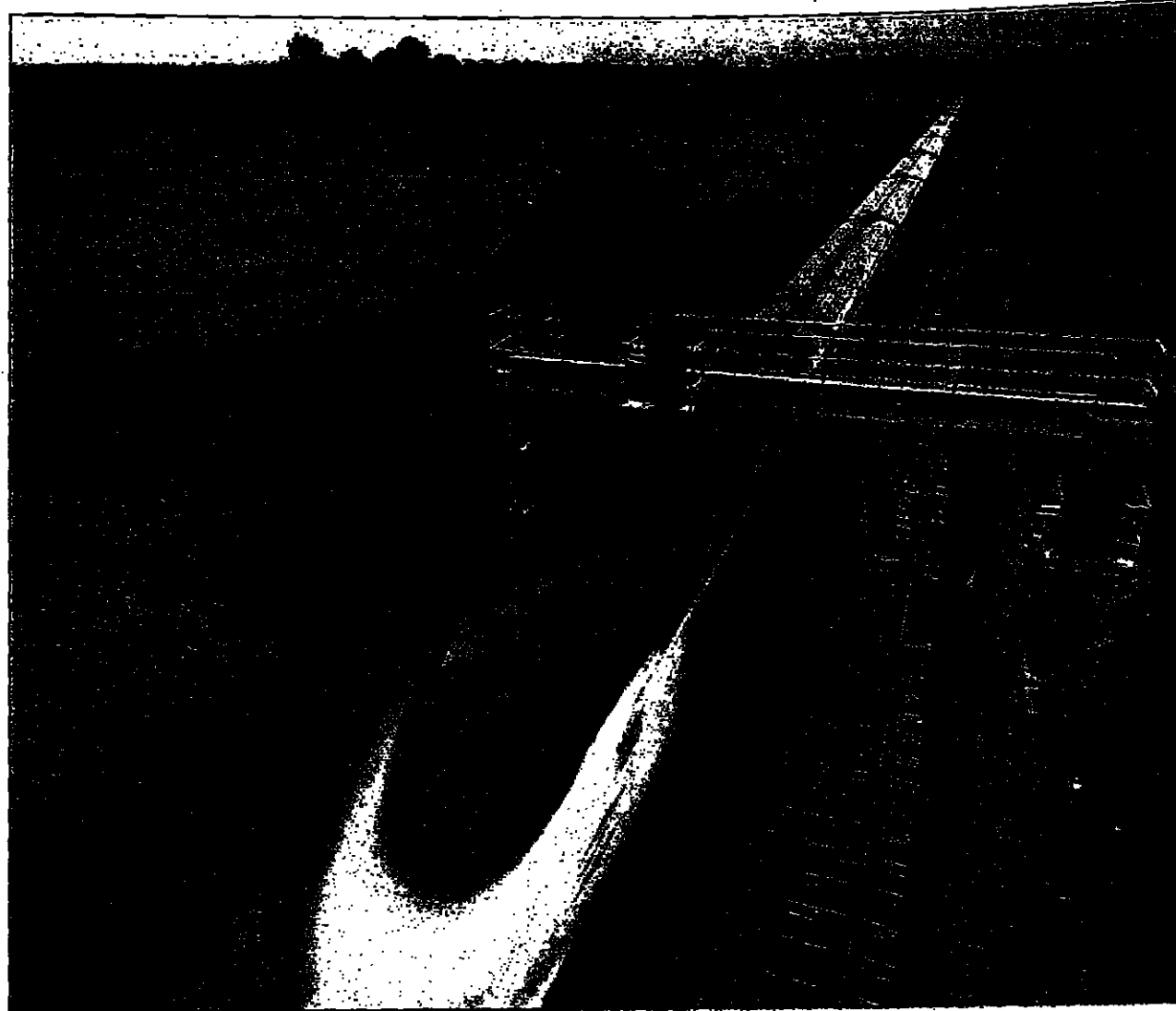
"These arrangements were not widely publicised at the time but one can only assume the government of the day felt this was the correct way to get the deal done," he added.

Senior ministers have grown increasingly alarmed at the extent of the liabilities faced by taxpayers and view LCR's directors with barely disguised contempt.

LCR retorts that had Eurostar and the rail link project remained within the public sector, then taxpayers would be far worse off than they are now. "At least the taxpayer has been spared the £100m we invested in the project. There is no appetite among shareholders to shoulder five times that amount," said one senior member of the consortium.

Mr Mills is thought to have been paid around £200,000 last year and Sir Derek about £100,000, not including pension entitlements. The other two executives, finance director Robert Holden and Union Rail managing director John Neerhout, are thought to have received around £160,000 and £100,000 respectively. The spokesman said they were fully entitled to compensation for loss of office under their service contracts.

The £100m of equity capital put up by the shareholders will be mainly used to run down the company and ensure a solvent liquidation. LCR's own liabilities consist mainly of creditors, including staff, property obligations and responsi-



Taxpayers may inherit the consortium's leasing liabilities on its fleet of Eurostar trains, understood to be around £275m

bility for some continuing Eurostar losses.

LCR employs about 30 staff at its corporate headquarters while Union Railways, the subsidiary responsible for managing the high-speed rail link, employs a further 150. LCR also has a contractual relationship with Rail Link Engineering, a joint venture made up of four LCR shareholders

which is designing the link and which employs 950 people.

The rolling stock lease liabilities on Eurostar's seven trains are in the region of £175m. Eurostar has a further £100m of leasing liabilities through its 61 per cent stake in Nightstock, a joint venture with the German, French and Dutch railways.

Meanwhile, Railtrack, one of the leading contenders to

take over the project, confirmed after a board meeting last night that it would give "serious consideration to any sensible proposal" on condition it served the interests of shareholders and did not compromise its existing investment programme.

Railtrack's preferred option is a cut-price scheme that would cost perhaps a third of

the £5.4bn LCR would have needed. Under this option, Railtrack would build the high-speed link only as far as Southfleet in Kent and then continue the route on existing track into Waterloo International. This would save the costs of tunnelling under central London and constructing a new terminus at St Pancras.

Outlook, page 23

## Shake-up in cables industry to cost 870 jobs

By Andrew Yates

BICC and Delta yesterday announced a radical shake-up of their troubled cables operations which will lead to 870 job losses in the UK and a string of factory closures.

Sites in north London, Swansea, Derby and Wrexham will close as part of the huge restructuring operation which will see the two companies swap large parts of their cable businesses in an effort to stem plunging profits.

The deals leave BICC to concentrate on heavy duty cable for the power transmission industry, based at its factory in Wrexham.

Delta will be focused on cable for the construction industry at its existing plants in Llanelli and Derby.

The move has been prompted by the dramatic slump in the European cables market has been dogged by over capacity.

BICC has already been forced to announce mass redundancies in Italy and Germany as part of a wide scale rationalisation of the business. The company has axed more than 2,000 workers from its cable business over the last twelve months as part of a £45m cost-cutting programme.

Alan Jones, chief executive of BICC, insisted that this would be the last major restructuring of the group's cables business for some time.

"When I arrived at BICC there was a lot of tidying up to do and this is the end of that tidying up program. This makes our cables business much stronger," he said.

Jon Scott-Maxwell, chief executive of Delta, said: "Delta is participating in the long overdue rationalisation of the European cables industry. I believe our cable business now has a long term future, whether that is with us or with somebody else." Delta is likely to look to sell the business as soon as possible as part of its strategy to concentrate on its electrical and manganese divisions.

In a complicated swap of assets BICC will pay Delta £5m. It has also bought Delta's copper rod mill for £17.8m at Enfield which will be closed down, with production shifted to Merseyside.

The reorganisation will cost BICC £140m and Delta £49m in asset write-downs and redundancy costs. BICC plans to close Delta's power cables business in Enfield, north London, Swansea and Derby after acquiring them as part of the deal.

Delta's shares jumped 18p to 265p and BICC's shares rose 0.5p to 140p. "This looks like a good deal for both sides in a dire market," said one industry analyst.

Investment column, page 24

## Hollick empire loses second senior executive

By Peter Thal Larsen and Nigel Cope

United News & Media, Lord Hollick's embattled media empire, yesterday parted company with its second senior executive in as many months when chief operating officer David Arculus announced that he was stepping down after just nine months in the job.

Mr Arculus is understood to be considering an offer to become chairman of IPC, the magazine group which was recently the subject of a management buyout by Civen, the venture capital group.

A spokesman for Civen refused to comment but said: "At some stage Civen will be looking to appoint a chairman of IPC, as with all its investee companies."

Mr Arculus, who helped build up magazine group Emap before he was lured to United, is believed to have quit after deciding it was not possible to work underneath Lord Hollick, United's hands-on chief executive, who has not taken as

active a role in the government as many expected him to.

"When David joined before the election everyone assumed that Hollick would spend more time advising the Government," said one industry source. "But Hollick is not that close to the leadership of the Labour Party."

"He may have thought that it would be his show," said another. "But Hollick seems to be there all the time."

Mr Arculus declined bluntly to comment on his departure. "I'm not saying anything."

Mr Arculus's departure follows shortly after the news that Stephen Grabiner, who runs United's regional and consumer titles, would be leaving to take up the job of chief executive of British Digital Broadcasting (BDB), the television group.

News of Mr Arculus's departure pushed United's share price down 26p to 692p. But analysts said this was an over-reaction. "He hasn't been at United long enough to make a difference," said one.

Mr Arculus has a contract



David Arculus: Stepping down after nine months

which ends in April 1997. His pay has never been disclosed, but his annual salary is believed to be well above the £360,000 he received while at Emap. Some industry sources suggested his payoff could be as high as £1m, although a company spokesman said negotiations were still continuing.

The departure prompted some in the industry to suggest that Mr Arculus is difficult to work with. He left Emap after 25 years after a simmering rivalry for the top job with chief executive Richard Miller.

Outlook, page 23

## Pennant-Rea consortium received £4m sweetener to buy bargain-priced HMSO

By Michael Harrison

A consortium led by the former deputy Governor of the Bank of England, Rupert Pennant-Rea, received a £4m sweetener to purchase the Stationery Office even though the final sale price was half the Government's target valuation, it emerged yesterday.

National Publishing Group, the company formed by Mr Pennant-Rea and the venture capitalists Electra Fleming, paid £54m for the Stationery Office in September, 1996.

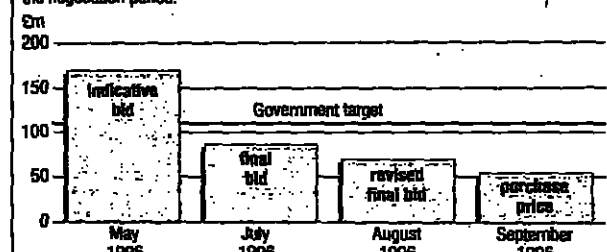
But a highly critical report on the sale published yesterday by the National Audit Office, the Government's financial watchdog, disclosed that National Publishing Group's initial indicative bid was £170m while the Government's advisers, Coopers & Lybrand, put a "benchmark valuation" of £110m on the business.

The report revealed how the winning consortium whittled down its offer price over a four-month period as the deteriorating state of the Stationery Office's finances and business prospects became apparent.

It also disclosed that in the

### Paper bids

Graph shows size of bids made by National Publishing Group for the HMSO during the negotiation period.



final few days before the business was sold, the Stationery Office was nearly bankrupted, suspending payments to suppliers because it was in danger of breaching its £50m statutory borrowing limit.

The Cabinet Office under the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Roger Freeman, therefore agreed to pay National Publishing the cash balances in the business at the point of sale which amounted to £3.8m.

The Cabinet Office justified the payment on the grounds that "Failure to compensate the purchaser in this way might well have led to a breakdown in the deal negotiations."

National Publishing subse-

quently told the NAO that the additional amounts owed to creditors exceeded the cash sweetener by £2m. Since the takeover, it has also axed 1,000 jobs from the workforce of 2,500 at a cost of £54m.

The Pennant-Rea consortium was one of 14 groups that submitted initial indicative bids in May, 1996. Its offer, at a price range of £150m to £170m was £9m more than the next highest bid from Hambros.

By the time it submitted its final bid in July, the price had been cut to £66m. In August it cut the offer price to £69m, citing risks associated with taking on the businesses and other additional costs. In September it re-

duced its offer for a final time to £54m because of delays in finalising completion accounts.

The NAO report is severely critical of the way the Stationery Office was run in the build-up to the sale, accusing it of "poor financial and management control", producing over-optimistic turnover and profit forecasts and having a badly-executed restructuring programme.

Although the original plan had been to float the business in 1997, the NAO said that the decision to bring forward the sale had no impact. "We found no evidence to suggest that a delay in the sale to improve the profitability of the business would have produced better value for money."

The costs of the sale to the taxpayer were £2.2m - equal to 4 per cent of the proceeds.

Last night, Mr Pennant-Rea said the NAO report confirmed that the taxpayer had received value for money. "Given the failure of state ownership to restructure the business, the disciplines of the private sector were essential to secure the long-term health of the business."

## BT abandons television broadcasting hopes

By Chris Godsmark  
Business Correspondent

British Telecom has abandoned hopes of offering mainstream television channels down its telephone wires, in favour of a drive to improve Internet services for home computers.

The decision, confirmed yesterday by Sir Peter Bondfield,

BT's chief executive, came as the company revealed a 12 per cent rise in profits between October and December, to £1.02bn.

Sir Peter gave the clearest signal yet that BT is no longer interested in using its network to offer entertainment programmes, despite the long-running campaign to end the Government's broadcasting

ban. The Department of Trade and Industry looks set to announce the lifting of the ban in 2000, a year earlier under the previous government's policy.

"It is extremely unlikely we'll be squinting television channels down our wires," said Sir Peter, adding that the technology had moved on since BT had talked of investing £15bn to bring fibre-optic cable to

every home in the country. BT will shortly begin two home trials offering much faster Internet access through its existing copper local network.

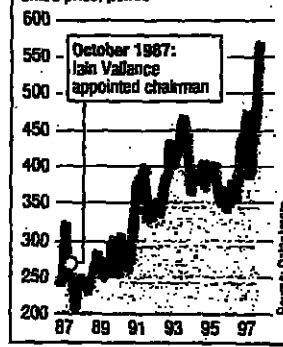
Sir Peter said talks were continuing with several US operators, but he said there were "no discussions" underway with Cable & Wireless. He hinted that BT would ask shareholders for the power to

make share buybacks at the annual meeting in July, but insisted no decisions had been taken.

The company's residential customer base grew by 10,000 lines in the last quarter, despite growing competition from cable companies. Losses from the company's expanding European operations were running at £300m a year.

### British Telecom

share price, pence



### Vallance goes part-time at BT

Sir Iain Vallance is to relinquish his role as executive chairman of British Telecom from August, moving to a part time position with the company after more than 10 years at the helm.

BT said Sir Iain would stay on as non-executive chairman until his contract expires in 2000, but that he would also explore outside interests. He is vice chairman of Royal Bank of Scotland and a board member

of Mobil. Sir Iain, who is 55, will receive an annual pension of £281,000, along with a reduced salary, without bonuses, which has yet to be decided by BT's pay committee. In the year to last April he was paid a basic salary of £485,000, plus an annual bonus of £185,000. However Sir Iain has for several years paid his cash bonuses to The Princess Royal Trust for Carers.

### STOCK MARKETS

Index	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	5552.50	-55.40	-0.99	5675.10	4188.10	3.27
FTSE 250	4983.90	-7.80	-0.15	4998.50	4384.20	3.20
FTSE 350	2851.50	-22.40	-0.84	2856.20	2075.70	3.25
FTSE All Share	2884.61	-20.34	-0.70	2923.83	2058.07	3.24
FTSE SmallCap	2425.10	1.20	0.05	2428.20	2182.10	3.10
FTSE AIM	998.90	0.80	0.08	1138.00	655.90	0.97
FTSE Pledging	1318.30	0.70	0.05	1346.50	1226.20	3.43
Dow Jones	8254.01	-60.79	-0.73	8220.05	6556.78	1.88
Nikkei	17174.93	-30.18	-0.18	20610.79	14488.21	0.90
Hang Seng	10820.03	-173.38	-1.61	16820.31	7908.13	3.70
Dax	4536.83	-51.60	-1.13	4807.20	3171.05	1.76

### INTEREST RATES

<b>Short sterling</b> 	<b>UK 10 year gilt</b> 	<b>US long bond</b> 																																																												
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MAIN PRICE CHANGES			
Risers	Price (p)	Chg (p)	% Chg
JBA Holdings	807.50	175.00	21.67
Biochem	153.00	23.00	17.69
MFI Furniture	133.00	7.50	7.50
Delta	265.00	18.00	7.23
Fallers	Price (p)	Chg (p)	% Chg
Modena	141.00	-17.00	-10.76
Monument UK/Gas	72.00	-4.00	-5.49
MFI Furniture	133.00	-7.00	-5.00
Premier Oil	44.75	-2.25	-4.79

### CURRENCIES

\$/£	DM/£	¥/£
1.6384 +0.056	1.6331 -0.005	160.00 -0.00
1.6384 +0.056	1.6331 -0.005	160.00 -0.00
1.6384 +0.056	1.6331 -0.005	160.00 -0.00

\$/¥	DM/¥	¥/DM
1.6384 +0.056	1.6331 -0.005	160.00 -0.00
1.6384 +0.056	1.6331 -0.005	160.00 -0.00
1.6384 +0.056	1.6331 -0.005	160.00 -0.00

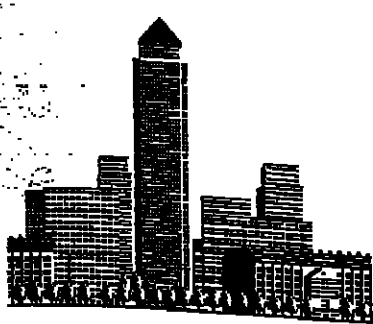
  

\$/DM	DM/DM	¥/DM
1.6384 +0.056	1.6331 -0.005	160.00 -0.00
1.6384 +0.056	1.6331 -0.005	160.00 -0.00
1.6384 +0.056	1.6331 -0.005	160.00 -0.00

### TOURIST RATES

Australia (dollars)	2.3246	Italy (lira)	2.856
Austria (schillings)	20.21	Japan (yen)	198.00
Belgium (francs)	59.37	Malta (lira)	0.6258
Canada (\$)	2.2876	Netherlands (guilders)	3.2421
Cyprus (pounds)	0.0422	Norway (kroner)	2.205
Denmark (kroner)	11.03	Portugal (escudos)	252.49
Finland (markka)	8.8010	Spain (pesetas)	249.35
France (francs)	9.6507	South Africa (rand)	7.207
Germany (marks)	2.8886	Sweden (kroner)	12.93
Greece (drachmes)	456.29	Switzerland (francs)	2.2051
Hong Kong (\$)	12.25	Turkey (lira)	350.859
Ireland (pounds)	1.4450	USA (\$)	1.5940





## OUTLOOK ON FALLOUT FROM LCR CRISIS. DAVID ARCULUS' RESIGNATION. AND A THUMBS DOWN TO THE INDONESIAN CURRENCY BOARD.

When the bicycling baronet, Sir George Young, awarded London & Continental Railways the Channel rail link concession in 1996, it must have completely skipped his mind that the whole idea behind such projects was to transfer risk from the public to the private sector.

With the consortium about to go belly up and Eurostar ripe for renationalisation it transpires that, far from picking up the tab, LCR's well-heeled shareholders look like passing £800m of liabilities back to the taxpayer.

At the very worst, the eight shareholders (SBC Watburg Dillon Read, Bechtel, National Express, Virgin, SNCF, London Electricity, Ove Arup and Sir William Halcrow and Partners) will end up shouldering losses of £100m. With balance sheets the size of SBC's such a sum is hardly likely to break the bank.

More importantly, this surely cannot have been the sort of risk-reward ratio that the Conservative government had in mind when it invented the Private Finance Initiative. When it came to the rail link, there was plenty of initiative on display, but sadly not much of it came from inside the Department of Transport.

Is LCR contrite? Not a bit of it. With breathtaking *chutzpah*, the consortium cheerfully suggests it has actually done the taxpayer a giant favour. Had it not come along two years ago and taken Eurostar and the rail link project off the Government's hands, then the losses being funded out of public money would be a lot bigger today.

Given LCR's ability to get a two-year traffic forecast wrong by a margin of 150 per cent, some people might be inclined

to take such assertions with a pinch of salt. Certainly John Prescott is unimpressed. LCR has pulled off the financial equivalent of what Chumbawamba achieved with an ice bucket.

At the very least, the LCR *débâcle* demands that the Treasury examine all the other PFI projects so far let to see whether the playing field is tilted in a similar direction. LCR's shareholders are contractually within their rights to pass the buck to the taxpayer. But equally, governments have all manner of things in their gift – such as airport slots, rail subsidies, public sector contracts and mandates for investment banking advice. Revenge, Mr Prescott may reflect, is a dish best served cold.

### It's been a pleasure working for you ...

A letter from David Arculus, who resigned abruptly as chief operating officer at United News and Media yesterday, to an old chum at the top international headhunting firm of Lewis, Banger and Rathbone, appears bizarrely to have been misdirected and as a consequence has turned up in the *Independent's* postbag. In the interests of transparency, we here reproduce it. "Dear Sir D... [name withheld to protect confidentiality],

"As I write, my name is being put to one of those ridiculous sweetness and light press releases announcing that I'm on my bike after just nine months in the job but with no hard feelings. I'm quoted as saying it

has been a real pleasure working for United while Lord Stevens, who hasn't spoken to me for months, says what an important contribution I've made to the company. Hal As you can imagine, my comments are through clenched teeth, arm twisted behind back and a grinning lawyer waving my contract before me.

"Actually it's been one of the most frustrating nine months of my life, much worse than my long-running feud while at Emap with Richard Miller. At least that was good fun and the company was going places. I think the problem was that at United I was brought in under false pretences. I was led to believe that Lord Hollick would be taking an increasingly back-seat role, that he would be spending large amounts of his time with his new Labour cronies, advising Margaret Beckett on competition policy and the like.

"Not a bit of it. In recent months, the Frenchman has been more hands on than ever. When I tried to shoe horn my way onto the television side of the group, they said I knew F-all about it and shut me out. It wasn't much better with the newspapers, which also had their own boss, Steven Grabiner. I suppose you've had a hand here, for he's about to depart for pastures new as well. If you recall, he was the man responsible for such triumphs of newspaper marketing as the £1-a-week *Telegraph*, but even so I couldn't get a look in.

"Round at Emap they seem to believe I was planning some kind of triumphant return by launching a United News and Media bid for the company. I have to say that even if I'd wanted to, I'd never have got it

through the bearded baron. He wouldn't let me bid for IPC and he wouldn't even let me acquire the *Autocar* magazine group. What I'm saying here is that for heaven's sake next time get me a job where I'm the undisputed boss, and not somebody else's lackey. By the way, I've already had several offers (who knows, I might even end up at IPC after all), so if you want your commission you'd better get a move on.

Yours in anticipation, David."

### Currency board lacks credibility

Robert Rubin, the US Treasury secretary, has given the thumbs down to Indonesia's plan to introduce a currency board. As he put it delicately in evidence to Congress, there were "a lot of issues" about whether the country would have enough credibility in the financial markets to be able to adhere to it. As he spoke, the rupiah was again in free fall, plunging 9 per cent as investors fretted about President Suharto's financial reforms – or lack of them – and growing political unrest.

Currency boards can sometimes work very effectively. The basic idea is that the board replaces the central bank, issuing domestic currency only when it is backed at a fixed exchange rate by a foreign currency such as the US dollar. If anybody in the private sector exports goods or brings in overseas investment they sell their dollars to the currency board in return for local currency, and vice versa. Local money supply can only increase if the country's foreign reserves in-

crease. The effect is to prevent all political meddling in the domestic economy, which becomes wholly controlled by the markets.

Currency boards have a long history, the first being set up in Mauritius in 1949. From there they spread throughout the British colonies. Gibraltar and the Falklands still have one. Hong Kong revived its own version in 1983 after a currency crisis triggered by doubts about the handover, and Argentina introduced one in 1991 after a severe hyperinflation.

These two are generally deemed to have worked well, sustaining confidence and keeping inflation low. So why are there doubts about Indonesia's proposal? One obvious concern is that the fluctuations in interest rates that can result from a currency board require either a very strong banking system, which Indonesia does not have, or a genuine willingness to let banks fail. Even if the regime has such will, it is not clear that a swift and brutal round of failures is the best approach in a tottering economy.

But the real catch is that a currency board can not substitute for credibility in the broader sense. There are suspicions that President Suharto wants the board so that an exchange rate of around 5,000 rupiah to the dollar can be set. That would help his family-owned companies meet their foreign debts. A rate of 8,000, which would be more in the wider interests of the country, could prove financially ruinous to Mr Suharto. Currency boards are often a highly effective mechanism for restoring international confidence in an economy, but they cannot be expected to work for the greater good when operated by essentially corrupt and nepotistic regimes. The IMF should have no truck with Mr Suharto's plans.

## Transco warns over pace of gas competition

By Chris Godsmark

More than 1 million homes have so far switched from British Gas to new suppliers as the domestic market moves towards full competition, the gas watchdog Ofgas revealed yesterday. But as Ofgas released the figures, Transco, the pipeline network, warned of "critical" risks to Ofgas's accelerated timetable to complete the roll-out of domestic competition.

Clare Spottiswoode, the industry regulator, said the customers numbers were "an important milestone," with al-

most one in four homes abandoning British Gas in areas where competition has been introduced. The figures included 956,800 customers who had already switched to alternative independent gas companies, along with more than 40,000 others who were waiting for Transco to process the move.

The roll-out began with trials in South-west England in Spring 1996 and has spread to Avon, Dorset, Kent and Sussex. Around a further 2 million consumers in Scotland and the north-east of England were able to choose their gas supplier

last November. Ofgas said another 400,000 households had signed up with a new supplier in the next competitive area, which covers 2.8 million homes in Greater Manchester and North Yorkshire and goes live on 27 February.

However the headline statistics hide marked regional differences in the willingness of customers to abandon British Gas. In Scotland and the North-east, where just over 400,000 homes have switched from British Gas, rival suppliers were surprised by the slower than expected switch rate. Transco's in-

tensified warning about the pace of competition reflected Ofgas's decision to open the final two areas of the market over a 48 hour period. Choice will be extended to 3.1 million homes stretching from East Anglia to Hampshire on 22 May, with the final 3.2 million customers in Greater London and Surrey included on the following day. There was originally a four week gap between the two regions in the previous timetable. Transco, which is building new computer systems to track customers, said there remained "a high probability that errors



Clare Spottiswoode:  
Welcomes competition

will occur which will require immediate action to remedy". The pipeline operator said the roll-out was also critically dependent on new suppliers' ability to cope with demand.

## Watmoughs finds white knight and shares soar in value

By Peter Thal Larsen

The battle for control of Watmoughs took a new twist yesterday as the printing group, which has been resisting a £168.3m hostile offer from Canadian rival Quebecor, announced that it was in talks with a potential white knight.

Shares in Watmoughs surged 46.5p to 320p as the company announced that it was in talks with an unnamed bidder which could make a cash offer of "substantially" more than 300p per share. Quebecor's offer stands at 257p.

The identity of the bidder remains a mystery. Analysts sug-

gested that American printers RR Donnelley & Sons and World Color were the most likely candidates. Roto Smeets de Boer, a Dutch firm, was also linked with Watmoughs but denied that it had made an offer.

Quebecor pointed out that its bid was still awaiting regulatory clearance and that it would "clarify its position" once the Office of Fair Trading and Department of Trade and Industry had ruled on the bid. Analysts have long argued that Quebecor would have to raise its bid in order to win approval. However, many thought that an offer around

290p a share would be enough to win the contest. Watmoughs' share price has traded above 257p – the level of Quebecor's offer – ever since the bid was first announced.

The arrival of a white knight surprised many observers. Watmoughs has consistently argued that it would be best placed to realise value for shareholders if it remained as an independent company.

But few shareholders believed that the management team was strong enough to replace chief executive Patrick Walker, who came back into the job from semi-retirement last year, when he steps down.

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from £85

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Payment can be made by Switch, Delta, Connect, Access or Visa. Travel Insurance is available at a special price of £10pp. Bookings must be received by Driveline at least 5 working days in advance of the requested date of travel. Within this period, where Driveline is able to accommodate your request, a £10 late booking fee will apply. All bookings will be verified by confirmation invoice and tickets are normally issued seven days prior to departure. If your departure date is within seven days, Driveline Europe will contact you to make suitable arrangements. A binding contract between you and Driveline Europe Ltd will come into existence when you have verbally confirmed your payment

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## THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY ANDREW YATES

### Brokers may be bargain buy

Britain's insurance broking sector has been a dire performer in recent years. Since 1993, it has underperformed the market by almost 60 per cent due to falling commissions and intense competition. Willis Corroon and Sedgwick, the only two brokers of any size left in the UK, have borne the brunt of the industry turmoil. The sector has increasingly suffered from a growing trend among multinational corporations to cut out the middle man.

Many companies have now grown to such a size that using an insurance company to cover a business risk is becoming increasingly impractical. They are instead setting up their own, captive insurance companies to cover day-to-day risks.

Bigger risks such as earthquakes or floods are still put out to reinsurers. But more often than not, companies are bypassing brokers to deal with the handful of reinsurers who take on these kind of risks.

This logic has taken a particularly strong hold in the US, where brokers such as Willis Corroon derive half their income. The trend has led to downward pressure on premium rates, reducing commission income for brokers. That has inevitably led to the consolidation of the industry. One by one, the brokers have been eliminated. Now there are just four: the two British firms and their giant US rivals, Marsh & McLennan and Aon.

That consolidation seems to have paused for now. John Reeve, Willis Corroon's executive chairman, has stubbornly resisted pressure to merge with Sedgwick, and hostile takeovers are difficult in what is seen as a people business.

Against this turbulent background yesterday's full year results from Willis pleased the market, with profits coming in comfortably ahead of expectations at £95.5m (£91.6m).

Willis has chosen a different course to Sedgwick, which has looked to win more fees rather than commission-based work, as evidenced by its acquisition of Noble Lowndes. Instead it has been able to increase commissions by using a system whereby the insurer agrees to pay higher commission in return for receiving a greater volume of profitable business.

Willis has also managed to boost US business with companies over there looking to spread business amongst the brokers still left in the business.

Analysts have pencilled in earnings of £105m for the current year, putting the shares on a prospective p/e ratio of 9. The

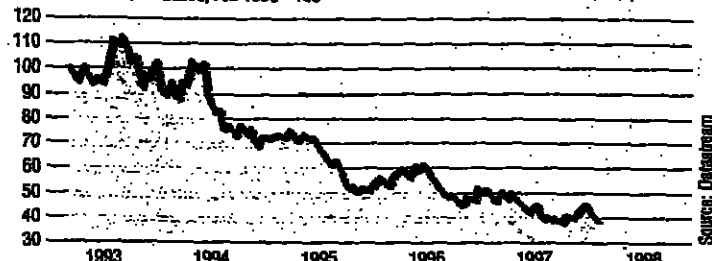
### Willis Corroon: At a glance

Market value: £571m, share price 135p (+4p)

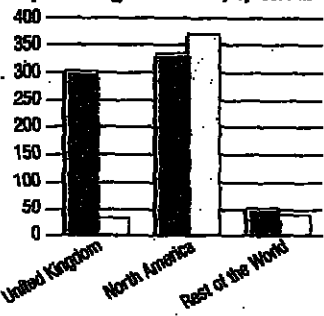
Five-year record	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Turnover (£m)	708	671	666	686	652
Pre-tax profits (£m)	75.2	5.6	50.2	91.8	95.5
Earnings per share (p)	11.3	0.0	7.0	7.0	13.6
Dividends per share (p)	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6

### Insurance brokers,

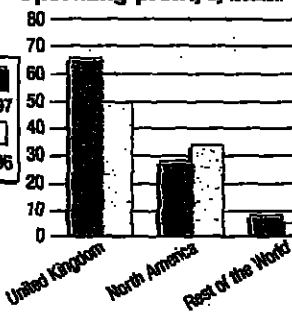
vs the FT Allshare, Released, Feb 1993-100



### Operating revenue, by location



### Operating profit, by location



broking market will remain tough. That said the shares are now sitting at such a large discount to the stock market they are beginning to look attractive. If trading gets much worse it can only heighten takeover speculation.

### Shell big enough to brave storm

For a company of Shell's size, one bad quarter barely rates as a blip. Still, yesterday's full-year results, which showed pre-tax profits falling by 36 per cent to £1.8bn in the fourth quarter, making a 14 per cent fall to £9.3bn in the full year, served as a useful reminder that the Anglo-Dutch oil giant is proving even harder to turn around than one of its supertankers. For all the restructuring that has been taking place in the past twelve months, nothing could shield Shell from the combined effects of the

falling oil price, the strong pound, and the crisis in Asia.

The gloom spread virtually across all of Shell's main businesses. Exploration and production earnings fell because of the lower oil price and warmer weather, while downstream profits were hit by restructuring charges. Chemicals suffered from the strength of sterling and lower margins in certain product areas.

The figure that worried investors most, however, was the drop in Shell's return on capital employed to from 13.3 per cent to 11.4 per cent in the final quarter. Shell aims to get returns up to 15 per cent by 2001 and 13 per cent by the end of this year. But if the oil price does not improve, no amount of frantic cost-cutting will allow it to achieve that.

In fact, the only spot of light was the company's decision to raise the dividends paid by Shell Transport & Trading, its UK parent, to reflect the loss of the associated tax credit. The re-

sult is that brokers are now forecasting that the dividend will grow by at least 12 per cent this year and next.

So what to do with the shares? In the grand scheme of things, yesterday's 10.25p fall to 411.5p is probably a bit of an overreaction. If you have to hold an oil stock, Shell is probably the most attractive: it's less exposed to the oil sector than its peers and has the benefit of more restructuring to come. But, as always, change is going to be slow.

### Cable swap boosts shares

The slump in the European cable market has produced a shocking share price performance at BICC and Delta. So yesterday's deal to swap cable operations looks an eminently sensible move.

Delta appears to have got the best out of the deal in the short term. It gets a £5m cash payment and cements its position in the building and construction market. More importantly by chopping costs and focusing the business, it becomes more saleable. Jon Scott-Maxwell, Delta's chief executive, has made no secret of the fact that the group's future does not lie in cables as it cannot hope to compete with the largest players on a European stage. This deal can only bring forward the division's disposal. So it is easy to see why Delta's shares jumped 18p to 265p on the news.

The response at BICC, however, was more muted with the shares edging up just 0.5p to 140p. Nobody is quite sure whether the cables market has reached the bottom. If it has, then BICC could emerge as the real winner from this deal, but it is a big if. All the big cables groups have taken huge amounts of capacity out of the market, but only time will tell if their actions have been enough to restore profitability.

The extent of the industry's problems have taken even the company by surprise. Despite chief executive Alan Jones' best efforts, BICC's shares have underperformed the market by almost 60 per cent over the last year and have fallen from 465.5p in 1994.

Analysts forecast 1997 profits at BICC of around £110m, putting the shares on a prospective P/E ratio of 15. The cable swap should help 1998 profits to rise to around £135m. Despite the share price collapse BICC's shares still don't look cheap but it probably worth holding on in the hope that the illusive recovery is finally round the corner.

## Celcis shares drop after profits warning

By Nigel Cope  
City Correspondent

Shares in Celcis International, the biotech company founded by the scientist Chris Evans and chaired by former England rugby coach Jack Rowell, lost 27 per cent of their value yesterday after the company issued a profits warning. The shares slumped 19p to a record low of 51.5p when the company said adverse currency factors and the financial turmoil in Asia meant current year profits were unlikely to meet analysts forecasts of £1m-£3m. The shares are now barely half the 100p issue price when the group came to the market in 1993.

The announcement was pounced upon by bear raider Simon Cawickell who been selling the shares "in the high 70s [pence]" the previous day. Mr Cawickell, who is known in the market as "Evil Kneivel", bought some shares back yesterday as the price fell sharply. However, he said the company still faced difficulties. "It looks to me as if they have lost their way."

Some analysts questioned

whether the profits alert would lead to management changes. But Arthur Holden, Celcis' chief executive, said no decisions had been taken. "The company will review the situation after the dust has settled and take the appropriate action." Founder Chris Evans is a non-executive director of the



Company founder:  
Chris Evans

group. Separately the company said it had unified the distribution of its hygiene monitoring product, the SystemSURE, by granting its US distributor Becton Dickinson exclusive rights worldwide. This has delayed short-term products sales for markets outside the US. But the company said it believed the new arrangement would provide a more efficient long-term solution.

In its statement, Celcis added that it was "developing a number of important new product initiatives for exploiting its proprietary technology and remains confident about the prospects for continued growth."

Celcis makes hygiene monitoring kits which detect contamination in food.

In October, the company raised £3.7m through the placing of new shares at 95p. The cash was raised to help fund the £4.4m purchase of Scientific Associates, a contract testing centre in the US.

Celcis shares reached a peak of 141.5p in 1995.

## Waterstone's founder returns as figurehead

By Nigel Cope  
City Correspondent

The sale of the Waterstone's bookselling chain to EMI and Tim Waterstone is expected to be announced in two weeks with a price tag of around £300m. EMI's due diligence is now in its final stages and the deal with WH Smith should be completed next month.

It is thought that Mr Waterstone's Daisy & Tom children's stores will be included in the new company, though at a greatly reduced valuation.

The two Daisy & Tom stores are expected to be valued at just £2m-£3m. This is a fraction of the £30m price tag which WH Smith claimed Mr Waterstone was attaching to the chain when he made his audacious £1bn offer for the WH Smith group last

autumn.

Daisy & Tom will be grouped together with Waterstone's and EMI's Dillons book stores and its HMV music chain. Some Dillons stores will be converted to the Waterstone's format. No decision has been made on further conversions but it is expected that the Dillons name will survive in some form.

Tim Waterstone will be chairman of the new company but will not have a major operational role. The books business will be run by Alan Giles, Waterstone's chief executive, with HMV run by Stuart McAllister, its existing managing director.

Mr Waterstone will emerge from the deal with an equity stake in the new business as he is investing several millions. However, the main shareholders

will be EMI and Advent International, the US venture capital group that is backing Mr Waterstone.

The plan is to de-merge the business into a separately quoted company. EMI is thought to favour an early exit though it is not clear if Mr Waterstone will have a longer term role.

The Waterstone's deal would lead to talks starting once more between WH Smith and Virgin over the Virgin-Our Price music business.

Virgin, which owns 25 per cent of the company, is interested in acquiring Smith's 75 per cent stake. It is understood that Smith's chief executive, Richard Handover, did not want to start negotiations until the Waterstone's deal was completed. A value of around £135m is anticipated.

THE INDEPENDENT  
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The Independent and Independent on Sunday in association with Terence Conran are delighted to offer readers the opportunity to enjoy lunch or early evening supper at six of London's top restaurants throughout February for £10

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0171 378 7031  
Lunch 12noon - 3pm, early evening supper 6pm - 7pm\*

Le Pont de la Tour Bar & Grill 36d Shad Thames, London, SE1 2YE  
0171 403 8403  
Lunch 12noon - 3pm, early evening supper 6pm - 7pm

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## FTSE to get 15-second update after 23 February

The FTSE 100 Index of leading shares will be calculated every 15 seconds from February 23. FTSE International, said yesterday. At present the index is calculated every minute.

FTSE International said it meant the index would reflect market movements faster and enable increased visibility for investors following the UK market.

Meanwhile, the options market LIFFE said it would introduce an electronic trading system for equity derivatives on individual stocks on 30 November. The new system, called LIFFE CONNECT, will allow investors to trade derivatives on electronic screens, using a system that matches buy and sell orders.

## Government pension cut

More than 800,000 people will see the government's contribution to their pension slashed because of a decision by the DSS, a survey revealed yesterday.

The annual survey by the National Association of Pension Funds, which covers 611 schemes worth £370bn, revealed 11 per cent of members are in schemes which face a cut in rebates paid to pension schemes by the DSS. The decision, which takes effect in April next year, has the same effect as cutting the pay of those employees by 0.9 per cent.

## Phone firm sales surge

Colt Telecom, the fast expanding group building business phones networks in European cities, yesterday revealed a 133 per cent surge in sales last year to £81.5m. Paul Chisholm, Colt's chief executive, said the company was on course to double the number of cities covered by the end of this year from six to twelve, including Zurich and Brussels. Colt's sales rose from £11.2m to £32.5m. Colt shares, which have doubled since a secondary issue last November, rose by 25p to £10.55.

## 'Don't tax parking' call

Retailers urged the Chancellor not to introduce a tax on car park spaces in next month's Budget. In its pre-Budget submission the British Retail Consortium said that would tax shoppers and raise inflation without reducing car use. It also urged that any new revenues from environmental taxes should be ring-fenced for spending on improved transport.

The BRC added that the minimum wage would increase the average weekly working bill by 3p or less than 0.1 per cent if it were set at £3.50. It urged the level should be based on total pay, including commissions and pension contributions, not just the hourly wage.

## COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Avon Products (P)	15.2m (15.5m)	1.07m (1.03m)	18.3p (17.1p)	3.3p (3.3p)
British Telecom (Q)	3.94m (3.78m)	1.02m (999.0m)	11.2p (9.4p)	0
Cable (Q)	45.03m (44.19m)	4.9m (2.7m)	7.89p (4.21p)	1.45p (1.30p)
Reckitt Benckiser (P)	6.70m (1.06m)	-3.11m (-4.54m)	-5.08p (-7.49p)	0
Stevensons (P)	-	-5.42m (1.50m)	-8.88p (1.25p)	0.20p (0.50p)
Temple Life Sciences (P)	0.098m (0.134m)	-0.11m (0.050m)	-2.5p (1.3p)	8.5p (8.5p)
World Holdings (P)	37.93m (-)	4.35m (-2.98m)	7.0p (-5.7p)	1.9p (2.9p)
Waterstones Health (P)	66.12m (50.05m)	8.28m (1.17m)	9.50p (4.5p)	2.85p (2.5p)
Willis Corroon (P)	-	95.5m (91.6m)	14.5p (13.6p)	6.6p (6.6p)
(P) - Profit (Q) - Income				

## Oxford scientists in the money

Two Oxford scientists could make a paper profit of £500,000 when the science group they founded comes to the stock market.

Oxford GlycoSciences was founded 10 years ago by Raymond Dwek and Raj Parekh, in collaboration with Oxford University. The university also stands to make a healthy profit from the flotation.

The group specialises in producing technology used by drug companies to help identify pro-

teins that cause diseases. The group has recently signed a deal with Incyte to develop databases for the world's biggest pharmaceutical companies. The group is also carrying out clinical studies on two liver cancer treatments.

Oxford GlycoSciences is looking to raise £25m-£30m which will value the group at between £75m and £100m. It has already raised £30m from equity backers, such as Warburg Pincus and The Wellcome Trust.

## Takeover of press group is blocked

The Government yesterday blocked the £52m takeover of Home Counties Newspaper Holdings, the regional newspaper publisher, by Johnston Press.

Nigel Griffiths, consumer affairs minister, said he decided not to give his consent without requiring a report from the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (MMC).

He said the 500p-per-share buyout announced in December would give rise to a "significant increase in concentration of the ownership of regional and local newspapers in the counties of Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire."

"The proposed transfer would mean that Johnston Press would be likely to have over half of the market for such newspapers in those counties, and a considerably higher share in some localities. I have competition concerns relating to the consequences for newspaper advertising rates in these areas," he said.

Mr Griffiths said the parties had made it clear in their application that they were not prepared to undergo an MMC inquiry. "If they wish to make another application which is not dependent on my giving consent without an MMC inquiry, they are free to do so," he added.

## IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE

No. 006157 of 1997  
CHANCERY DIVISION  
COMPANIES COURT

IN THE MATTER OF  
ELEMENTIS PLC  
(formerly Harrogate & Crossfield plc)

and  
IN THE MATTER OF  
THE COMPANIES ACT 1985

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Petition was on 28th January 1998 presented to Her Majesty's High Court of Justice for (a) the sanctioning of a Scheme of Arrangement and (b) the confirmation of the reduction of the capital of the above-named Company from £200,000,000 to no less than £16,906,445.

AND NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that the said Petition is directed to be heard before the Judge of the Companies Court at the Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London WC2C on Monday 23rd February 1998.

Any Creditor or Shareholder of the said Company desiring to oppose the making of an Order for the confirmation of the said reduction of capital should appear at the time of the hearing in person or by Counsel for that purpose.

A copy of the said petition will be furnished to any such person requiring the same by the undersigned Solicitors on payment of the regulated charges for the same.

Dated the 13th day of February 1998

STEPHENSON HARWOOD  
One, St Paul's Churchyard London  
EC4M 8SH Ref: 700/232  
Solicitors for the above-named Company















# Absence of Gascoigne exposes limitations

## Football

By Glenn Moore  
Football Correspondent

THE purpose of this week's twin internationals with Chile was to broaden Glenn Hoddle's options as he plots England's World Cup course. Instead, the 2-1 defeat for the B team on Tuesday and the 2-0 reverse for the seniors on Wednesday has narrowed them.

He will not have thought so as he sat fidgeting on the bench, waiting for a chance to play, but Wednesday night at Wembley was a good one for Paul Gascoigne. In his absence from the fray, England's midfield was revealed to be no better than workmanlike, their limited col-

lective vision exposed by the expansive performance of Jose Luis Sierra on the opposing side.

The Chilean's 50-yard pass for Marcelo Salas's breathtaking opening goal was hailed by Hoddle as one of the best he had ever seen, but it was by no means his only incisive one. There were at least two more chance-creating balls which fell into the modern parlance of "key pass", along with a series of quick-witted lay-offs which knitted together the South Americans' midfield.

Against this cohesion England could only offer the ankle-tapping David Batty and his eager but limited cohorts, Rob Lee, Nicky Butt and Phil Neville. Each have their qualities, Batty is hard to play against

—although he came dangerously close to overdoing it — Butt is composed with the ability to go past people, Lee has an eye for goal and Neville is athletic and two-footed.

None, however, can see a pass like Sierra or Gascoigne, or, to an extent, the injured trio of David Beckham, Paul Scholes and Jamie Redknapp. The best England passing of the week came from Paul Merson in Tuesday's B-team match at The Hawthorns and he faded as the team lost shape and heart in the second half. Eight years on from Italia '90, it seems England are still reliant on the unreliable Gascoigne.

It is not just a matter of Gascoigne's passing ability, it is also his desire for possession.

Hoddle admitted that no one demanded the ball the way he does and the back three were thus offered limited options when in possession. This usually meant, after briefly passing among themselves, they then either played a hopeful hoof towards Dion Dublin's head or opted to kick over the top for Michael Owen to chase.

It was thus also a good night for another spectator, Gareth Southgate, who is more comfortable in possession than most English defenders. It also compounded the misfortune of neither Redknapp nor Rio Ferdinand being fit enough to play as sweepers for the B team.

After the defeat, the heaviest of his 15-game reign, Hoddle said: "We didn't want the

ball enough and struggled to pass it out from the back. As a team we did not pass well, did not defend well and became stretched out."

Yet Hoddle himself must bear a large share of the blame. He did pick one passer, Teddy Sheringham, but then pushed him too far forward to influence play, leaving the midfield under-strength in numbers and quality. This was why England became pulled out of shape, as they had against Poland at home when he paired Alan Shearer and Les Ferdinand in attack with Steve McManaman behind them.

The error was tacitly admitted when he asked Sheringham to play in a deeper role at the start of the second half, but was

then compounded by bringing him off for Shearer, giving England a bizarre forward line of three strikers.

While his desire not to withdraw Dublin or Owen was understandable, the fumbling last 20 minutes which saw England hoisting balls aimlessly into the box will have done neither much good.

Owen emerged unscathed judging by his confident — and justified — post-match assertion of: "I was quite pleased with my performance."

Dublin was also upbeat, but his constant reference to it being "great to wear the white shirt of England" betrayed a belief that he did not really belong — in stark contrast to Owen, who was only surprised at being

capped so early, not at the honour itself.

Dublin began well, linking cleverly with Owen, but his inexperience of the wiles of international defenders showed as he failed to make clean contact on any header near goal and he was eventually marginalised. So far the quoted judgement by Gordon Strachan, his manager at Coventry, that he could be an "international-class centre-half but only a decent centre-forward" is half right.

Owen is more likely to be persevered with. His pace and alertness made him a constant threat. He created several half-chances for others and was unlucky not to score himself. Hoddle, who has now capped 39 players and called up 50, said

Owen "did extremely well. He did some exciting things and proved he can get on the back of defenders".

England's next match is in Switzerland on 25 March. This is followed by matches with Portugal and Saudi Arabia at home and Morocco and Belgium in Morocco. There are also some B internationals.

It is not much, and fortune will play a large part in the fate of individuals. The likes of Redknapp, Lee and Rio Ferdinand, Merson and Andy Cole will need to stay fit if they are to seize a place when the squad for France is named on 2 June. Once again, however, it will be Gascoigne's fitness — mental and physical — which will be under most scrutiny.

## Snowboarding reclaims its pot of gold

### Winter Olympics

Mike Rowbottom  
reports from Nagano

WITH one bound, the beleaguered sport of snowboarding burst free from its bonds here yesterday. Ross Rebagliati, who tested positive for marijuana after winning snowboarding's first Olympic title here on Sunday, was able to take the gold medal out of his pocket and hang it back round his neck after being cleared on appeal.

Rebagliati profited from a manoeuvre more involved than any he has ever attempted on a snowboard — the Legal Loop-hole, involving deft footwork and a 180-degree turn.

The Court of Arbitration for Sports concluded that an ambiguity in the rules on marijuana operating at these Winter Games meant the snowboarder had no legal case to answer. But, sadly for the 22-year-old Canadian, life was still far from totally cool. Wearing his medal, he spent more than 11 hours at a local police station convincing officers there was no basis for charging him with drug abuse. It was, Canadian officials maintained, a mere matter of formalities.

The ruling left many asking where Olympic sport now stands in relation to marijuana. When it was suggested to the Canadian *chef de mission*, Carol Anne Letheren, that anyone could compete at the Games even if they were high as a kite, she replied: "Under these rules, yes."

It transpired that the International Ski Federation (FIS) regulations which had been applied, offering the option of punishment for anyone whose sample registered more than 15 nanograms per millilitre of marijuana, were drafted with other sports in mind.

FIS officials explained that it was meant to deter sportsmen and women tempted to take the drug to calm their fears before more perilous events, giving the example of ski jumping.

For obscure reasons, the name of Eddie Edwards was also mentioned at this juncture by the FIS people — but Letheren was swift in her denial of any implication that the fondly remembered British jumper was either scared or a marijuana user.

She added that the snowboarder slalom in which Rebagliati won his title was regarded by the FIS as a technical sport. "They believe taking marijuana would have a detrimental effect in that event," Letheren explained.

She added that Rebagliati's defence that his reading of 17.8 nanograms was due to passive smoking from his housemates

back home in Whistler, near Vancouver, was not even considered by the court.

The Canadians had prepared medical evidence suggesting that prolonged exposure to marijuana smoke — for example, an hour a day for six days — could create readings of well over 100. The reading for someone who had just smoked a joint would be 400.

Other choice new evidence was also revealed. "It is Ross's belief," Letheren said, "that because of the nature of the substance where he lives in Whistler — in that area it is four times more potent than in any other area — the only explanation he can give is that it was second-hand." How this is likely to affect Whistler's tourist trade remains to be seen.

"I think FIS clarification early on in these Games would certainly have helped everybody," said Letheren, an IOC member, with painstaking diplomacy.

However you view the Olympics' youngest sport, you cannot accuse it of being low profile. Austria's world champion, Martin Freinademetz, was thrown out of the Games yesterday after a party during which furniture was broken and a hotel switchboard was put out of action after a can of beer was thrown over it.

Freinademetz was among the guests at the snowboarders' hotel, the Shig-Kogen Prince, who were involved in a drunken party in the lobby. "We had a party, we had fun, something got broken," said Freinademetz, a 28-year-old known as The Terminator because of his aggressive racing style. "It's not cool, but it happens."

Although local officials were not keen to press charges, Austrian officials felt differently and withdrew the accreditation of Freinademetz, who finished seventh in Sunday's slalom event.

Freinademetz, who later apologised and offered to pay for any damage, rounded off his night of fun with a brief spin in an official snowmobile.

His qualities as a future role model for the sport look questionable, but Letheren yesterday expressed the opinion that Rebagliati, who she said had handled himself extremely well in difficult circumstances, now had a "real opportunity" to demonstrate leadership within the sport.

"We are concerned that this ruling could send out a mixed message to young people," Letheren said. "We know marijuana is a drug which many people use, but our information is that this is not a problem in snowboarding at the elite level. Guys like Ross can stand up and say: 'It isn't part of it.'"

Perhaps he will. But don't hold your breath.



Cool customer: Switzerland's Gian Simmen skis his way to gold in the halfpipe event yesterday

Photograph: AFP

## Britain hope to add bronze to tattoos

THE British women's curling team were not regarded as likely medalists at these 18th Winter Games, but they have now put themselves into a position where they are just one victory away from a bronze.

Such was the commitment of Britain's Scottish quartet that three of them — skipper Kirsty Hay, Katie Loudon and Fiona Bayne, had made their Olympic ambitions tangible by having tattoos of the Olympic rings applied to their backsides.

Jackie Lockhart, who did not feel moved to do the same thing, said yesterday: "The tattoos were 'very discreet', measuring one centimetre by three centimetres."

Asked if there was any likelihood that these tattoos would see the light of day, perhaps if the British quartet made sure of a medal by winning Saturday's semi-final, she replied: "Yes, we can hope." Whether the hoping was connected to the results or the tattoos was not clear.

Britain's medal hopes in the

curling competition had appeared to rest with the men's team of Dougie Dryburgh, Ronnie Napier, and brothers Philip and Peter Wilson. But they were left hoping that fortunes would go their way on the final day after mixed fortunes yesterday. A 9-5 victory over the hosts in the morning was followed by a 4-7 defeat by the European champions, Germany.

It means that Britain must win their final match with the USA today and hope that the team above them in fourth place, Sweden, lose. That would give them the opportunity to progress to Saturday's semi-final by way of a play-off.

The women, however, are safe in fourth place, having secured their fourth win with a 6-5 decision over Germany. The other semi-finalists are Canada, Sweden and Denmark.

The game against Britain was a tight affair with Britain allowing a 4-2 lead to turn into a 4-5 deficit before Hay, a 26-year-old medical sales rep from

Perth, drew the last stone of the last end into the house to secure two points and a semi-final place. "We are delighted to have got this far," Hay said. "We do not have any preferences for the semi-finals. Against Canada it would be tough but we had a reasonable game against them. The semi-finals are different anyway because every team is a little bit more nervous and the expectations on Canada are huge. I think we are in as good a position as we could have hoped for."

Those sentiments were echoed by Lockhart. "The men got more publicity than us beforehand but if people had looked at our record they would have seen that we have played well at world championship level."

"We started slowly in this tournament, gradually settling to the ice, but we were quietly confident hopefully we will be peaking at just the right time."

Britain's sole figure skater at these Games, Steven Cousins,

finished sixth in the first section of his competition — the short programme — marked only by one slight stumble.

Cousins has given himself the chance to finish in a respectable position following tomorrow's concluding freestyle programme. "It felt great," he said. "I was so happy to be out there giving it my best."

Cousins, who was disappointed with his seventh place at the European Championships, had vowed to take risks here at what will be his last Olympics. But he was only able to produce a triple-double combination last night, while the top four managed back-to-back triples.

Cousins' training partner, Elvis Stojko, seeking an Olympic gold to add to his world titles, led the standings after receiving one perfect six. But he faces tough competition from the American challenger Todd Eldredge and the Russians, Alexei Yagudin and Ilia Kulik.

Mike Rowbottom

## Salas 'turned down' by English clubs

By Alan Nixon

MARCELO SALAS, Chile's Wembley hero, could have come to England for half the £12m being paid by Lazio, it emerged yesterday.

Long before Manchester United expressed an interest in him, the agent Tony Henry was in negotiations to bring Salas to England. "Blackburn had their chance for months," he said. "Salas wanted to come to England and would have gone to Blackburn immediately. The price at the time was £5m and Salas was looking for £400,000 a year, which is only average Premier League money."

Henry said he alerted Tottenham and Everton when Blackburn pulled out, but met with little interest.

Salas's international teammate Javier Margas is a target for Sheffield Wednesday. The club's manager, Ron Atkinson, has made a £1.8m bid for the experienced centre-half, who plays for Universidad Catolica.

Middlesbrough have signed the Colombian international striker Hamilton Ricard for £2m from Deportivo Cali, subject to a work permit, on a four-and-a-half-year contract.

## Fax fracas leads to departure of Roberts from Huish hot seat

### Non-League notebook

By Rupert Metcalf

THE FINAL and most bizarre victim of the war of words between Stevenage Borough and Newcastle United was Graham Roberts, who until this week was the manager of Yeovil Town.

The former Tottenham and England defender has lost his job at the ambitious Somerset club because of his alleged involvement in sending a controversial fax to St James' Park prior to Newcastle's acrimonious FA Cup fourth-round replay against Stevenage last week.

The fax, which found its way into the Hertfordshire team's dressing-room, was apparently on Yeovil Town headed paper and reportedly contained disparaging comments about Stevenage. It allegedly said: "We are not all arseholes in the Vauxhall Conference."

When the news of the fax broke, Yeovil's first reaction was to suspend Roberts for 14 days.

John Fry, their chairman, said: "We strive hard to represent our club, our town, our league and our sport in a professional and courteous manner. Matters that impinge on our good reputation are matters for disciplinary action."

Fry added that Yeovil were keen to "distance themselves totally" from the rude remarks in the fax and on Wednesday it was revealed that Roberts was leaving the club "with immediate effect". His departure is likely to lead to the loss of several key players who, like Roberts, live in London, where training sessions were held. The coach, Colin Lippiatt, will take charge of the team at Hayes tomorrow.

Roberts, who has also managed Enfield, joined Yeovil in 1995 and took them to the Isthmian League title and promotion to the Conference last season. Prior to moving to Huish Park as player-manager, he was with Stevenage, who upset Yeovil by delaying the release of his playing registration.

## Martin allowed to use buggy

### Golf

By Andy Farrell

CASEY MARTIN, the 25-year-old American golfer who suffers from a degenerative circulatory condition in his lower right leg which prevents him from being able to walk 18 holes, has won the right to use a buggy in competition. However, the Open may still be closed to him.

The landmark ruling, handed down by the US Magistrate Tom Coffin in Martin's home town of Eugene, Oregon, means he can use a cart in US PGA and Nike Tour events. But the ruling only applies to Martin, and to the PGA Tour, which Martin took to court under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Given the disparate governing bodies in the game, it will still be a while before Martin can ride a buggy in a major championship. Should he try to qualify for the US Open or the Open Championship, he will have to walk.

Although the US Golf Association is reviewing its conditions in light of the judgement, David Fay, its executive director, had stated that they will not change the entry conditions for the US Open, which require competitors to walk.

However, the Royal and Ancient secretary, Michael Bonalack, said there would be no review for the regulations governing the Open Championship, which state that "players shall walk at all times during a stipulated round unless permitted to ride by the Championship Committee".

"Everyone has tremendous sympathy for Casey Martin," Bonalack said. "There are a lot of competitions where a player may use a buggy, but the Open is the ultimate test and walking is a part of that."

"The case in America was brought by a player against his association under their employment laws. None of the players are employed by the R&A, or the Open Championship."

### Results from the Winter Olympics

**CURLING**  
Men's 8th preliminary round: United States 8 Germany 5; Great Britain 9 Japan 5; Norway 7 Sweden 4; Canada 8 Switzerland 3. Sixth preliminary round: Norway 5 Switzerland 4; Canada 5 Sweden 3; Germany 7 Great Britain 4; Japan 8 United States 6.

**FIGURE SKATING**  
Men's short programme: 1 K. Kulik (Rus) 45.15; 2 S. Stojko (Ger) 40.51; 3 T. Eldredge (US) 45.15; 4 A. Yagudin (Rus) 42.50; 5 P. Camerlengo (It) 35.25; 6 S. Cousins (GB) 30.70; 7 I. Yagudin (Rus) 35.25; 8 D. Eldredge (US) 40.51; 9 M. Yagudin (Rus) 40.51; 10 Z. Guo (Chn) 35.25.

**ICE HOCKEY**  
Men's 9th place match: Germany 4 Slovakia 2. 11th place match: France 5 Italy 4. 12th place match: Japan 3 Austria 3 (ot, Japan won 2-1 on penalties).

Women's preliminary round: China 3 Sweden 1; United States 2 Japan 0; Canada 4 Finland 2.

**NORDIC SKIING**  
Men's 10km cross-country classical: 1 Bjorn Dæhlie (Nor) 27min 28.5sec — 2 Mikko Gieddala (Fin) 27:32.5 — 3 Mika Myllylä (Fin) 27:40.1 — 4 V. Sinyov (Rus) 27:45.1; 5 T. Alnagard (Nor) 27:48.1; 6 J. Moe (Nor) 27:58.0; 7 E. Jonne (Nor) 27:58.7; 8 A. Veerup (Est) 28:00.7; 9 S. Swenson (US) 28:10.6; 10 S. Faurer (Nor) 28:15.5.

Women's 10km cross-country pursuit: 1 Larissa Lazutina (Rus) 46min 08.8sec — 2 Olga Danilova (Rus) 46:13.4 — 3 Katarina Neumayr (Aut) 46:14.2 — 4 T. Tarakanova (Rus) 46:17.1; 5 S. Bismondo (It) 46:38.6; 6 J. Tschepko (Rus) 46:48.2; 7 A. Moen-Guldén (Nor) 47:04.6; 8 B. Marthinsen (Nor) 47:11.1; 9 B. Albrecht (Swi) 47:11.8.

**SNOWBOARDING**  
Half-pipe finals  
Men  
1 Gian Simmen (Swi) 85.2pts — 2 Daniel Francis (Nor) 82.4 — 3 Ross Powers (USA) 82.1  
4 F. Rohrer (Swi) 78.7; 5 G. Christagnot (It) 78.5; 6 J. Soderqvist (Swe) 77.8; 7 S. Kalberg (Fin) 76.5; 8 M. Michalschuk (Can) 76.0.

Women  
1 Nicola Thost (Ger) 74.5 pts — 2 Stine Brun Kjeldsen (Nor) 74.2 — 3 Shannon Dunn (US) 72.8 — 4 C. Buth Burniske (US) 72.5; 5 M. Ridler (Can) 71.1; 6 M. Hesseo (Fin) 70.8; 7 J. Johnson (Swe) 69.0; 8 J. Vassao (Swe) 62.7.

**SPEED SKATING**  
Men's 1500m  
1 Andrie Bonndal (Nor) 1min 47.87sec — (world record)  
2 J. de Vries (Neth) 1:48.3  
3 R. Kjelshagen (Neth) 1:48.2

4 J. Bos (Neth) 1:48.75; 5 K. G. Boulette (US) 1:50.04; 6 M. Hennen (Neth) 1:50.31; 7 H. Noake (Japan) 1:50.49; 8 T. Aoyama (Japan) 1:50.58; 9 C. Brueker (Ger) 1:50.86; 10 A. Anshin (Rus) 1:50.88.

**MEDALS TABLE**

	G	S	B	Tot
Germany	4	4	4	12
Russia	4	3	0	7
Norway	3	3	2	8
Finland	2	1	2	5
Japan	2	1	0	3
United States	2	0	2	4
Netherlands	1	1	1	3
Canada	1	1	1	3
Switzerland	1	0	1	2
Bulgaria	1	0	0	1
France	1	0	0	1
Italy	1	0	0	1
Austria	0	2	4	6
Czech Republic	0	1	1	2
Ukraine	0	1	0	1
Belarus	0	1	0	1
Belgium	0	0	1	1

### TIMETABLE

TODAY (times GMT)  
Alpine skiing: Men's downhill 01:15; Men's combined downhill 02:00.

Curling: Men's seventh round: Gt Britain v United States 05:00; Japan v Germany 05:00; Sweden v Switzerland 06:00; Norway v Canada 06:00; US break (if necessary) 10:00. Women's seventh round: United States v Japan 02:00; Denmark v Norway 02:00; Gt Britain v Sweden 02:01; Canada v Germany 02:00; US break (if necessary) 10:00.

Figure skating: Ice dancing compulsory 02:00.  
Ice hockey: Men's final round: United States v Sweden 05:45; Canada v Czech Rep 05:45; Finland v Czech Republic 05:45; Qualifier 2 v Russia 06:45.

Luge: Men's doubles 05:00.  
Nordic combined: 90m individual ski jumping 03:30.  
Speed skating: Women's 500m first round 02:30.

Television times: BBC2 07:45-8:45, 12:30-14:45, 19:00-20:00, BBC1 01:00-02:30. Eurosport 24-hour coverage.  
TOMORROW  
Alpine skiing: Men's super-G 11:45 (Fri); Women's downhill 01:15.  
Cross-country skiing: Men's 15km freestyle pursuit 02:00.  
Nordic combined: 5km individual cross-country 04:00.  
Speed skating: Women's 500m second round 02:30.  
Figure skating: Men's free programme 02:00.  
Ice hockey: Men's final round: Qualifier 1 v United States 05:45; Sweden v Canada 05:45; Japan v Sweden 05:45; Finland v Czech Rep 05:45; Qualifier 2 v Russia 06:45.  
Luge: Men's doubles 05:00.  
Nordic combined: 90m individual ski jumping 03:30.  
Speed skating: Women's 500m first round 02:30.







All change at the Bridge: Vialli the new Chelsea player-manager as breakdown in pay talks ends Dutch master's two-year reign

# Gullit sacked in bolt from the blue

A club in turmoil

By Adam Szusterman

RUUD GULLIT'S tenure as player-manager of Chelsea came to an abrupt end after 18 months yesterday when he was replaced in the same role by the former Italian international striker Gianluca Vialli, one of the first players signed for Chelsea by Gullit.

The exact sequence of events that led to Gullit's departure remains unclear but Ken Bates, the Chelsea chairman, said at a hastily arranged press conference at Stamford Bridge yesterday: "We were unable to match his demands."

Gullit, appointed Chelsea manager in succession to Glenn Hoddle in the summer of 1996, had a contract which was due to expire in June of this year and has reportedly been locked in negotiations over a new contract with Chelsea's managing director, Colin Hutchinson, since October.

Yesterday, however, Gullit denied that he had been involved in talks prior to a meeting last Thursday.

"I was astounded to find out from the media that I had been replaced as Chelsea coach by Gianluca Vialli. I was only asked to attend one meeting in the last six months to discuss the future. This meeting took place on 5 February, when Colin Hutchinson and myself talked very amicably about a new two-year extension to my contract."

"At no time during my discussion was there any doubt in my mind that I would re-sign. In fact, I specifically told anyone who asked that I would sign a new deal after more talks - there were no more talks."

"I am committed to Chelsea, and in particular to the fans, whose dreams I have tried so hard to fulfil."

"It is incorrect for Colin Hutchinson to state that Chelsea Football Club tried to



Meet the new boss: (From left) Colin Hutchinson (managing director), Gianluca Vialli (new player-manager), Gary Staker (translator) and Ken Bates (chairman) ring the changes yesterday. Photograph: Peter Jay

negotiate with me for three months - there were no negotiations."

For his part, Hutchinson said in a statement yesterday: "Uncertainty about Ruud Gullit's future at Chelsea has dragged on for several months. We have been attempting to get Ruud to commit to an extension to his contract beyond his present deal, which expires on 30 June 1998, since last October. The delay has become potentially damaging. Back-room staff with mortgages to pay couldn't be sure they would be in a job after the season ends. Because of Ruud's non-commitment we took the unusual step of guaranteeing first-team manage-

ment staff a further one year employment should Ruud leave and his successor not require their services. For the good of the club and planning for next season the situation has had to be resolved."

"Ruud and I met last Thursday. During a 40-minute meeting it was established Ruud was prepared to extend by two years. For our part, we indicated that we wished the new contract could be as a manager only. We believed this would allow Ruud more time to concentrate on the team and enable him to get involved in new areas like going out to watch potential players, assess up-coming opposition and spend more time working

on technique and skills with individual players after the normal training sessions."

"We have appreciated that Ruud has found it increasingly difficult combining playing and managing, despite us easing his workload. Unfortunately while we were prepared to give Ruud a contract which we believe would have made him the best-paid manager in the Premiership, we were not able to meet what he wanted and expected. We simply could not afford what he was asking. Naturally this was disappointing. Ruud was told at the end of the meeting that unfortunately the gap was too wide to allow further meaningful ne-

gotiations and that we would need to actively pursue lining up a replacement."

Vialli was apparently approached on Monday and was offered the job on Wednesday evening. According to Hutchinson, Gullit did not hang around to hear the bad news. "I had a meeting with Ruud at lunchtime today," Hutchinson said at yesterday's press conference. "But unfortunately it did not get as far as telling him that he was being replaced because he decided to call an abrupt end to the meeting."

Bates said: "I'm sorry that it's come to this but we had this problem two years ago when we had another manager [Glenn

Hoddle] who wouldn't make his mind up until April and as we were already planning for next season it was important to ensure a smooth continuity."

"There may be supporters who are sad that he is leaving and there may be others who take a contrary view but I am delighted to pay tribute to him. He took us on to a new plane as far as football was concerned. He helped make Chelsea one of the most talked about clubs in the world and he won us the FA Cup in his first season and will always be remembered for that. I'm sad he's leaving but one has to face up to facts."

While speculation will abound regarding Gullit's future

- whether it lies in his native Netherlands or with his former club in Italy, Milan, or elsewhere - Vialli was looking forward to his new challenge. "I'm absolutely delighted and I have to say that I was amazed when Colin asked me if I was available for the job," he said. "This is the most unbelievable thing that's happened in my career. I have a lot of great memories but this is something different even from the feeling of scoring a goal."

"I'm still a little confused but I'm very happy and I hope I can be the right person for the right job."

"When Colin asked me if I was available, I called some good friends for advice and

they told me that I was suitable. But I'm just a beginner and I know it's going to be different from being a player. The supporters have been unbelievable with me over the past two seasons and I would just ask them to keep supporting the club and the team."

"I know that for the players it will be a bit difficult to go through this unusual situation but I hope they can go through it with maturity, which is the most important thing. I was one of the lads and I still am, but some things will have to change and what I want to do is improve the relationship between the manager and the players which is the key to any successful team."

## Vialli, the Michelangelo of Stamford Bridge

The new manager

By Guy Hodgson

WHEN Vujadin Boskov, the Yugoslav coach of Sampdoria, was asked to describe Gianluca Vialli, he did not hold back. "He defends like a tiger," he said, "attacks like a lion and is sharper than a puma." It remains to be seen whether he has the managerial wisdom of an owl.

There were several paradoxes about the announcement that the 33-year-old Italian

striker will become Chelsea's player-manager, not least of which is that he is still at Stamford Bridge. For much of his time under Ruud Gullit, Vialli appeared to be on his way out.

Only last May, as Vialli was about to be given a desultory two-minute appearance in Chelsea's FA Cup final win over Middlesbrough, Gullit appeared to have decided that his first signing as Chelsea manager would stay only for a season. "I don't want any player to leave, every player here is welcome to stay," he said. "But if

the player himself has said he wants to leave, then it is difficult." There was no doubt who he had in mind.

Vialli joined Chelsea in 1996, a few weeks after helping Juventus win the European Cup. It was the climax of a career that had begun with his local club, Cremonese, was nurtured under Boskov at Sampdoria and reached full flower at the Stadio delle Alpi.

A strong player who was described as clumsy as a youngster, but who achieved a delicacy of touch in his late 20s,

he signed for Juventus in 1992 for a then world record of £12m. Three years later he was world player of the year. "He is," Gianni Agnelli, the Juventus owner, said, "the Michelangelo of the Sistine Chapel. A sculptor who can transform himself into a painter."

The 1996 European Cup final was a bitter-sweet moment for Vialli, who lifted the trophy knowing it would be his last game for the club. Juventus had offered him only a year's contract with no improvement in wages. "There

are ways of making a player unwanted," he said.

His free-transfer status tempted Arsenal and Rangers, but he plumped for Chelsea, or rather fashionable London, signing a three-year deal worth £4.2m. Soon he was ensconced in a Knightsbridge flat, his distinctive shaven head frequently seen at the Italian restaurant, San Lorenzo's.

"London was always my dream," he said. "It was a matter of image. Moving from one club to another is never easy. It had to be a radical change."

Vialli began only 25 games for Chelsea in 1996-97, while this season, despite Gullit frequently singling him out for praise, he has started only eight. Yet he has scored seven goals. In charge now, Vialli can select himself as often as he likes.

He is hugely popular with his supporters and he embarks on his new career at a fortuitous moment. Not many begin management with their team one match away from Wembley and second in the Premiership.

The puma, the lion and the tiger have landed on their feet.

## Cold, aloof and ruthless, yet his appeal was magnetic

The departing hero

By Clive White

WE KNEW it would have to end one day, so there can be no regrets about Ruud Gullit's leaving. Two and a half years ago he was more than most of us expected him to stay when Glenn Hoddle pulled off one of the transfer coups of the decade. There is not a football fan in the country, no matter his persuasion, who cannot say that he did not feel just a little bit more proud about the English game for Gullit's involvement in it.

Probably no other footballer in the world could have done more, by his mere presence, to lift the profile of the English game abroad. He has been a godsend to the Premiership and doubtless their paymasters, Sky Television, too.

It is a mark of Gullit's standing in the game that he should have become the first black manager in the Premiership without anyone ever commenting on the fact. Furthermore, that it should have been at a club where 10 years earlier another black player, Paul Canoville, was bounded out because of racial abuse.

Gullit has never been the sort to be fazed by such problems. His self-confidence, which at times borders on arrogance, was apparently invested in him by his father, a self-made man who emigrated to the Netherlands from Surinam.

And yet despite his apparent popularity with the public at

large, Gullit has had his detractors here and for reasons that had nothing to do with racial prejudice. Perhaps because the game comes so easy to him, he is not as passionate as some would like. "Look, there are a lot of other things in life," he once said. "When I am at home I don't even think or talk about football. It's not my whole life. I like it, I like playing it. I do not like talking about it."

If he is not commenting on a match for television, Gullit



rarely goes to games. He left Chelsea's scouting to other people. In fact, he had to be persuaded to go and watch even his own teams play, other than the first XI of course. And yet, in other respects, he was the ultimate professional. When Chelsea won 6-1 at Tottenham recently, one might have expected someone as laid-back as Gullit to be putting his feet up in the dug-out. Not a bit of it. Even at 4-1 he was up on his feet cajoling his players, urging them on to greater heights.

Yet players want to play for him like few other managers. His appeal is magnetic. While Hoddle succeeded in luring Gullit to

England in the twilight of his career, it is doubtful whether even he would have had sufficient cachet to attract some of Serie A's leading players like Gianfranco Zola and Gianluca Vialli.

Gullit can be ruthless in his determination to succeed. Probably no other manager in England could have got away with leaving out Vialli as often as he has, as well as other players of similar standing such as Zola and Mark Hughes.

There have been stories that he is uncaring, cold to the point of indifference and aloof with his players. But then so was Brian Clough and countless other great managers. "As far as he is concerned," his assistant, Graham Rix, said recently, "he is treating them no differently from the way he was treated when he was a player in Milan at the top of his career and found himself left on the bench."

Gullit has enjoyed his English experience. In Italy he found it difficult to escape attention, even in a city as large as Milan. Privacy is respected even less there than it is here and there has been minimal intrusion into his private life, including his relationship with Johan Cruyff's daughter. "It's because I lived my life so seriously over there," he has said, "that I now feel so free over here, playing and managing Chelsea, living in London, going to gigs and the cinema and just having fun."

All good things, though, must come to an end.

### The king is dead, long live the king

Ruud Gullit

1962: Born Surinam.  
1978: Signed for Haarlem.  
1981: Made international debut.  
1982: Joined Feyenoord.  
1983: Signed for PSV Eindhoven.  
1987: Signed by Milan for £5.5m. European and World Footballer of the Year.  
1988: Helped Milan to win the European Cup.  
1989: Won European Cup with Milan.  
1990: Won second European Cup again.  
1992: Won second Italian title with Milan.  
1993: Won third Italian title with Milan before joining Sampdoria.  
1994: Retired from international football.  
1995: Moved back to Milan for seven months before returning to Sampdoria.  
1996: Signed two-year contract with Chelsea.  
1996: Appointed player-coach in succession to Glenn Hoddle.  
1997: Guided Chelsea to sixth place in the Premiership and won the FA Cup.  
1998: Sacked as Chelsea manager.

Gianluca Vialli

1964: Born Cremona.  
1980-84: Signed for Cremonese.  
1984: Signed for Sampdoria for £2.0m.  
1985: Signed for Sampdoria.  
1986: Signed for Sampdoria.  
1987: Signed for Sampdoria.  
1988: Signed for Sampdoria.  
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1997: Signed for Sampdoria.  
1998: Signed for Sampdoria.

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ACROSS

1 Scottish official job involving a good deal of travel (7)  
5 Struggle to produce combination of grain and fruit (7)  
9 Unusual treatment applies when ailing, having caught cold in the first place (7,8)  
10 Goddess or some other at Olympus (5)  
11 Church worker caught twisted gentleman in the grip of the Devil (9)  
12 Teams with polish will get a glance (9)  
14 What may be used to restrain members in strikes? (5)  
15 Crackers decorated with coils? (5)  
16 Item of women's underwear affected Arth post (9)

DOWN

18 Merrily reversing sensation encountered in depression (9)  
21 Girl embraced by Madeleine (5)  
22 Uncommon description of a beampole laid flat? (4,2,3,6)  
23 Ciphers possibly having a round shape (7)  
24 Haunt of thieves around City clearly lacking in heart and goodness (7)

1 Own bodyguard is chasing vigilante group (7)  
2 Finished rebuilding the road in West Devon (4,3,4,4)  
3 Love in my soul dissipated in a worrying way (9)  
4 More than one story follows on the radio? (5)

5 Bird, or, on part of coat of arms (9)  
6 Violin used in dramatics (5)  
7 When there's zero profit in having committed oneself? (5,2,2,6)  
8 Motors with English and Spanish girl (7)  
13 Ill-considered and almost rude, I see (9)  
14 Dashing round unseated rival, like a medieval knight? (9)  
15 Crowds supporting the French religious representatives (7)  
17 Stayed up (not half) dancing for Mardi Gras? (7)  
19 Astonish the little woman with gold (5)  
20 Cockney, finally: "I ad' old of the crop" (5)

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